

A right excellent  
and famous Comœdy called  
*the three Ladies of London.*

WHEREIN IS NOTA-  
BLIE DECLARED AND SET  
foorth, how by the meanes of Lucar, Loue  
and Conscience is so corrupted, that  
the one is married to Disli-  
mulation, the other fraught  
with all abhomin-  
tion.

A PERFECT PATTERNNE FOR ALL  
Estates to looke into, and a worke right wor-  
the to be marked. Written by R.W.  
as it hath beene publicquely  
played.



AT LONDON,  
Printed by Ro-  
ger Waide, dwelling neere  
Holburne Conduit, at the signe  
of the Talbot. 1584.









*Three Ladies of London.*

# The Prologue.

13.

**T**o sit on honours seate, it is a loftie reach,  
To seeke for praise by making brags, oftentimes both get a breach.  
We list not ride the rowling Rackets, that dims the chrystall skies,  
We meane to set no glimmering glaunce before your curteous eyes.  
We search not Plutos pensive pit, nor tast of Limbo lake:  
We shew of warlike fight, as sword and shield to shake.  
We not of the Powers deume, ne yet of furious sprites:  
We not seeke high hilles to climbe, nor talke of lones delights.  
We not heere present to you, the thresher with his flayle:  
We doe we here present to you, the milke maide with her paille.  
We shew not you of countrey toile, as hedger with his bill:  
We doe not bring the husbandman, to loppe and toppe with skill.  
We play not heere the Gardiners part, to plant, to set and sowe:  
You maruell then what stuffe we haue to furnish out our shewe.  
Your patience yet we craue a while, till we haue trimd our stall:  
Then young and olde come and behold our wares, and buy them all.  
Then if our wares shall seeme to you, well wouen, good and fine,  
We hope we shall your custome haue, againe an other time.

FINIS.





# A pithe and pleat Comedie

## The first Act.

Enter Fame sounding before Loue and Conscience.

Loue. **L** By Conscience, what shall we say to our estates,  
to whome shall we complaine?  
O: how shall we abridge such fates, as beareth by our paine?  
Tis Lucar now that rules the rout, tis he is all in all:  
Tis he that holds her head so stout, in time tis he that workes out  
Oh Conscience, I feare, I feare a day, (fall.  
That we by her and blurie, shall quite be cast away.

Consci. In deed I feare the worst, for euery man doth seue,  
And comes from cuntries strange and farte, of her to haue a browe.  
Although they ought to seeke true Loue and Conscience cleare:  
But Loue and Conscience few do like, that leane on Lucars chaire:  
Men ought be rul'd by vs, we ought in them beare sway:  
So should ech neighbour liue by other, in good estate al way.

Loue. For Lucar men come from Italy, Barbary, Turkey,  
from Iury: nay the Pagan himsele,  
Indaungers his bodie to gape for her pelse.  
They forsake mother, Prince, Countrey, Religion, kisse and kinne,  
Nay men care not what they forsake, so Lady Lucar they winne.  
That we poore Ladies may sigh to see, our states thus turned and tost,  
And worse and worse is like to be, where Lucar rules the rost.

Consci. You say the truth, yet God I trust will not admit it so:  
That Loue and Conscience by Lucars lust, shall catch an ouerthrow.

Fame. Good Ladies rest content, and you no doubt shall see,  
Them plagued with painefull punishment for such their crueltie.  
And if true Loue and Conscience liue, from Lucars lust lasciuious:  
Then fame a triple crowne will giue, which lasteth aye victorious.

Consci. God graunt that Conscience keepe within the bounds of right:  
And that vile Lucar do not daunt, her heart with deadly spight.

Loue. And grant O God that Loue be found in Citie, Towne, and Cuntry,  
Which causeth wealth and peace abound, and pleaseth God almightie.

Fame. But Ladies, ist your pleasure to walke abroad a while,  
And recreate your selues with measure your sorowes to beguile.

Consci. Passe on good Fame, your steppes do frame, on you we will attend,  
And pray to God: that holds the rod, our states for to defend. (Exunt

## The second Act.

Enter Dissimulation, leaning on Farmers long coat, and  
a cappe, and a fowle and beard painted motley.

Dissim. **N** Iy no lesse then a farmer, a right honest man,  
But my tong can not stay me to tell what I am:  
Nay who is it that knowes me not by my partie coloured head?  
They may well thinke that see me, my honestie is fled. (Exit



## of the three Ladies of London.

Tush a figge for honestie, tut let that goe:  
 Sith men, women, and childzen my name and doinges do knowe,  
 My name is Dissimulation, and no basemind I beare,  
 For my outward effectes my inward scale doe declare:  
 For men doe dissemble with their wiues, & their wiues with them again,  
 So that in the heartes of them I alwayes remaine:  
 The child dissembles with his father, the sister with his brother,  
 The mayden with her mistres, and the young man with his lover:  
 There is Dissimulation betweene neighbour and neighbour,  
 Friend and friend one with an other.  
 Betweene the seruant and his Maister, betweene brother and brother,  
 Then why make you it strange that ever you knew me,  
 Seeing so often I rannege thowout every degree?  
 But I forget my businesse, ile towards London as fast as I can,  
 To get entertainment of one of the three Ladies, like an honest man.

Enter Simplicitee lyke a Miller all mealy with  
 a wande in his hand.

They say that there is preferment in London to haue,  
 Mas and there be ile be passing and braue:  
 Why Ile be no more a miller, because the maydens call me dusky pole,  
 One thumpes me on the necke, and an other strikes me on the nole:  
 And you see I am a handsome fellow marke the composure of  
 Faith ile goe seek paraduentsures, and be a seruing-creature. (my stature,  
 Whither away good fellow I pray thee declare.  
 Mary ile clare thee, to London, would thou didst goe there.  
 What if I did, would it be the better for thee?  
 I mary should it, for I loue honest company.  
 I agreed, there is a bargin, but what shall I call thee?  
 Cause thou arte an honest man ile tell thee, my name is Simplicitee.  
 I name agreeing to thy nature, but stay here come I maye compaignie.

Dissim.  
 Sympli.  
 Dissim.  
 Simpli.  
 Dissim.  
 Simpli.  
 Dissim.

Enter Fraud with a Sword and a Buckler like a Ruffian.

Husse once alofte and if I may hit in the right bayne,  
 Where I may beguile easely without any great payne:  
 I will flout it and braue it after the lusty swash,  
 Ile deceiue thousandes, what care I who lye in the lashe.  
 What Fraud well met, whither trauellest thou this way?  
 To London to get entertainment there if I may,  
 Of the three Ladies, Lucar, Loue, and Conscience:  
 I care not whome I serue (the Deuill) so I may get pence.  
 O Fraud I know thee for a deceitfull knaue,  
 And art thou gotten so baniacion and braue:  
 I knew thee when thou dwelledst at a place called Graues-end,  
 And the guests knew thee too, because thou wast not their friend:  
 For when thou shouldst bring reckoning to the guests,  
 Thou wouldst, but twise so much, and I weare it cost thy dame no less,  
 So thou didst beciue them, and thy dame too:

Fraud.  
 Dissim.  
 Fraud.

Simpli.



## A pithie and pleasant Comcedie

And because they spied thy knauery, away thou didst go.  
 Then thou didst go into Hartforshire, to a place called Ware,  
 And because horses stood at hay for a peny a night there,  
 So that thou couldst get nothing that kind of way,  
 Thou didst grease the horses teeth, that they should not cate hay,  
 Then thou wouldest tell the rider his horse no haie would cate.  
 Then the man would say, giue him some other kind of meate.  
 Sir, shall I giue him Otes, Fitches, Pease, Barly, or Bread,  
 But what ere thou gauest him, thou stolest thre quarters when he was  
 And now thou art so proud with thy filching & cosening art, (in bed.  
 But I thinke one day thou wilt not be proude of the Rope and the Cart.  
 Take a wise fellowes counsell Fraude, leaue thy cosening and filching.

Fraude. Thou hozson raicall swad auant, ile bang thee for thy braulirg,  
 How darest thou defame a Gentleman that hath so large a liuing?  
 Simpli. A goodly Gentleman Ostler, I thinke none of ail you wil beleue him.  
 Fraude. What a clinchpope dudge is this: I can forbear him no moze.

Let Fraude make as though he would strike him, but let  
 Dissimulation step betwene them.

Dissim. My good freend Fraude refraine, and care not therfore,  
 Tis Simplicite that patch, he knoweth not good from bad.  
 And to stand in contention with him, I would thinke you were mad.  
 But tell me Fraude tell me, hast thou bene an Ostler in thy daies?

Fraude. Tut I haue proued an hundred such waies:  
 For when I could not thriue by all other trades,  
 I became a Squire to waite vpon Iades.  
 But then was then, and now is now, but let that passe,  
 I am as thou seest me, what care I the deuill what I was.

Dissim. You say you go to London, in faith haue with you then,  
 Simpli. Nay come and go with me good honest man.  
 For if thou go with him, he will teach thee all his knauery,  
 There is none will go with him, that hath any honestie.  
 I botes on thy motley beard, I knowe thee, thou art Dissimulation,  
 And hast thou got an honest mans coat, to semble this fashion.  
 Ile tell thee what, thou wilt euen semble and cog with thine own father,  
 A couple of false knaues togither, a Cheefe and a Broker.  
 Thou makes townes folkes beleue, that thou art an honest man in the  
 Thou doest nothing but cog, lie, and foist with hypocrisie. (cuntry,  
 You shall be hanged togither, and go alone togither for me,  
 For if I should go, the tolkes would say, we were knaues all thre.

¶ Enter Symon and Vserie hand in hand.

Symo. Friend Vserie, I thinke we are well neare at our iourneies end:  
 Vserie. But knowest thou whome I haue espied?  
 Symo. No.  
 Vserie. Found our great frend.  
 Symo. And I see an other that is now come into my remembrance.  
 Vserie. Who is that?  
 Symo. Mary M. Dany Dissimulation, a good helper, & our old acquaintance.

Howe



## of the three Ladies of London.

Nowe all the Cardes in the stock are deile about,  
 The foure knaues in a cluster comes ruffling out.  
 What fraud and Dissimulation happily found out,  
 I meruaile what peece a worke you two goe about.  
 Faith sir we met by chaunce, and towarde London are bent,  
 And to London we hye it is our chieftest intent,  
 To see if we can get entertainment of the Ladies or no.  
 And for the selfe same matter euen thither we goe.  
 Then we are luckely well met, and seeing we wishe all for one thing,  
 I would we our willes and wishing might winne.  
 Yes they will be sure to winne the Deuill and all,  
 Or els theyle make a man to spew out his gall:  
 Oh that wilde Vserie, he lent my father a little money, and for breaching  
 Heooke the fee-simple of his house and mill quite a way: (one day  
 And yet he borrowed not halfe a quarter so much as it cost,  
 But I thinke if he had had but a shilling it had bene lost:  
 So he kild my father with sorrow, and vndoe me quite,  
 And you deale with him sir you shall finde him a knaue full of spight.  
 And Symony I ple I, Symony too he is a knaue for the nonce.  
 He loues to haue twenty liuinges at once,  
 And if he let an honest man as I am to haue one,  
 Hele let it so deare that he shalbe vndone:  
 And he seekes to get Parsons liuinges into his hand,  
 And puts in some odd dunce that to hys payment will stand:  
 So if the parsonage be worth forty or fifty pound a yere,  
 He will geue one twentie nobles to mumble seruice once a month there.

Symony and Vsurie both.

What rascall is he that speaketh by vs such villony.  
 Sirs he was at vs carewhile too, it is no matter, it is a simple soule  
 called Simplicitee.

Enter Loue and Conscience.

But here come two of the Ladies therefore make readie.  
 But which of vs all shall first breake the matter.  
 Mary let Symony do it, for he finely can flatter.  
 Nay sir because none of vs shall haue preheminance aboue other:  
 We will sing in fellowship together like brother and brother.  
 Of troth agreed my maisters let it be so,  
 Nay and they sing, ile sing to.

The Song.

Good Ladies take pittie and graunt our desire.

Conscience reply.

Speake boldly and tell me what ist you require.

Their reply.

! Your seruice good Ladies, is that we doe craue.

Her reply.

! We like not, nor list not such seruantes to haue.

I. ill.

The

Simple.

Sym.

Fraud.

Vsery.

Dissim.

Sym.

Simple.

Fraud.

Dissim.

Vsery.

Sym.

Simple.



## A pithie and pleasaunt Comedie.

### Their replie.

If you entertaine vs, we trustye will be

But if you reframe vs, then mosse unhapye.

We will come, we will runne, we will bend ar your beck:

We will plye, we will hye, for feare of your check.

### Her reply.

You doe sayne, you doe flatter, you doe lye you doe prate,

You will steale, you will Robbe, you will kill in your hate.

I denie you, I denie you, then cease of your talking:

I reframe you, I disdain you, therefore get you walking.

What fraud, Dissimulation, Usury, and Symony,

Consci. How dare you for shame presume so bouldly.

As once to thew your selues before Loue and Conscience,

Not pealding your lewd liues first to repentaunce:

Thinke you not that God will plague you for your wicked practises,

If you intend not to amend your vilde liues so amisse?

Thinke you not God knowes your thoughtes, words, and workes,

And what secret mischiefes in the heartes of you lurkes?

Then how dare you to offend his heavenly maiestie,

With your dissembling deteite, your flatterie and your usury.

Fraud. Cut sirs, seeing Ladie Conscience is so scrippalous,

Let vs not speake to her, for I see it is fruitelous:

But what say you Lady Loue, will you graunt vs saour?

Loue. He no such seruantes, so ill of behauiour:

Seruantes moze fitter for Lucar then Loue,

And happie are they which refraine for to proue:

Shamelesse, pittilesse, gracelesse, and quite past honestie;

Then who of good conscience, but will hate your companie.

Usury. Here is scrippalous Conscience, and nice Loue in dede,

Simpli. Tush if they will not other will, I know we shall speede.

Consci. But Lady I stand still behinde, for I am none of their companie,

Simpli. Why, what art thou: oh I know thou art Simplicitee.

Consci. I sayth, I am Simplicitee, and would sayne serue pee.

Simpli. No, I may haue no fooles to dwell with me.

Loue. Why, then Lady Loue will you haue me than.

Simpli. I Simplicitee thou shalt be my man.

Loue. But shall I be your good man?

Simpli. I my good man indeede.

Loue. I but I would be your good man, and swap vs a wedding with good

Simpli. No, Loue may not marrie in any case with Simplicitee, (speede.

Loue. But if thou wilt serue me, ile receaue thee willingly,

And if thou wilt not, what remedie.

Simpli. Yes I will serue re, but wil you goe into dinner for I am hungry,

Loue. Come Ladie Conscience, pleaseth you to walke home from this com-

Consci. With right good will for their lightes pleaseth not me. (pany?

Exeunt, Lady Loue and Conscience.

Fraud. Fraud is the cloxbish knaue, and Usury the hard harted knaue:

And Simony the dyamen daintie knaue,

And Dissimulation the spitefull knaue of Spade.

Come



of the three Ladies of London,

Come there any moe knaues, come there any moe:  
I see fower knaues stand in a rowe.

Let Fraud runne at him, and let Simplicitie runne in, and  
come out againe straight.

I way Iudge be gone quickly.

I wous doe thrust out my eyes with a Lady.

Exit Simplicitie.

Fraud.  
Simpli.

Did you euer see Gentlemen so rated at befoze,  
But it killes not, I hope one day to turne them both out of doze.  
We were arrantly flowted, rayled at, and skoft in our kinde,  
That same Conscience is a bild terrour to mans minde:  
Yet faith I care not, for I have borne many moze then these,  
When I was conuersant with the Clergy beyond the Seas:  
And he that will liue in this world must not care what such say,  
For they are blossomes blown down, not to be found after May.

Vlery.

Sym.

Faith care that care will, for I care not a poynt,  
I haue shift it hitherto, and whilst I liue I will ieoberd a ioynt:  
And at my death I will leaue my inheritour behinde,  
That shalbe of the right stampe to follow my minde:  
Therefore let them prate till their heartes ake, and spit out their euill,  
She cannot quaile me if she came in likenesse of the great demill.

Fraud.

Wasse Fraud thou hast a doughtie heart to make a hangman off,  
For thou hast good skill to helpe men from the coffe:  
But we were arrantly flowted, yet I thought she had not known me,  
But I perceiue though Dissimulation do disguise him, Conscience can see,  
What though Conscience perceiue it, all the worlde cannot beside:  
Tush there be a thousand places where we our selues may prouide:  
But looke firs here commeth a lustie Lady towards vs in haste,  
But speake to her if you will, that we may be all plasse.

Dissim.

Enter Lady Lucar.

I pray thee doe, for thou art the likeliest to speede.  
Why then ile tout with a stomacke in hope of good speede.  
Faiee Lady, al p Gods of good fellowship kisse ye (I would say blisse ye,  
Thou art very pleasant & ful of thy roperipe (I would say victorick,  
Ladie you tooke me at the worke, I beseeche you therefore.  
To pardon my bouldnesse, offending no moze.

Vlery.  
Dissim.

Lucar.

Dissim.

We do the matter is not great, but what wouldest thou haue:  
How shall I call thee, and what ist thou doest craue:

Lucar.

I am called Dissimulation, and my earnest request,  
Is to craue entertainment for me and the rest:  
Whose names are Fraud, Vlery and Symony,  
Great carers for your health, wealth, and prosperitie.

Dissim.

Fraud, Dissimulation, Vlery, and Symonie,  
Now truely I thanke you for profering your service to me:  
You are all hartily welcome, and I will appoint straight way,

Lucar.

B.i.

Where



## A pithie and pleasaunt Comœdie

Where eche one in his office in great honour shall stay:

But Alsery didst thou neuer knowe my Graundmother the olde Lady  
Lucar of Venice.

Vsury. Yes Madam I was seruant vnto her and liued there in blisse.

Lucar. But why canst thou into England, seeing Venice is a Cittie?

Where Alsery by Lucar may liue in great glozy.

Vsury. I haue often heard your good graundmother tell,  
That she had in England a daughter, which her farre did excell:

And that England was suche a place for Lucar to bide,

As was not in Europe and the whole world beside:

Then husting greatly to see you, the countrey, and she being dead,

Lucar. I made haste to come ouer to serue you in her stead.

Gramercie Alsery, and I doubt not but that you shal liue here as ple-  
I and pleasaunter too, if it may be, but Symonie from whence (santly,  
came ye, tell me.

Sym. My birth, nurserie, and bringing vp hitherto, hath bene in Rome, that  
auncient Religious Cittie:

On a time, the Monkes and Fryers made a banquet, whereunto they  
waited me:

With certaine other some English Merchantes whiche belike were  
of their familiaritie.

So talking of many matters, amongst others, one began to debate,

Of the abundant substance still brought to that state:

Some said the encrease of their substance and wealth,

Came from other Princes, and brought thether by stealth.

But the Friars and Monkes, with all the ancient company,

Said that it first came, and is now vpholden by us Symony:

Whiche the English Merchantes gaue eare to: then they flattered a little

As English men can do for aduantage, whē increase it doth touch. (so much.

And being a shipboure merry, and overcome with drinke on a day,

The winde serued, they hoyst sayle, and so brought me away:

And landing here, I heard in what great estimation you were,

Made bolde to your honour to make my repayre.

Lucar. Well Symonie I thanke thee, but as for fraud and Dissimulation,

I know their long continuance and after what fashion:

Wherefore Dissimulation, you shalbe my Steward,

In office that euery mans case by you must be preferred.

And you fraud shall be my rent-gatherer, my leaser of Leases and my  
purchaser of Land.

So that many olde bribes will come to thy hand.

And Alsery because I knowe you be trustie, you shall be my  
Secretary.

To deale amongst Merchantes, to baryen and exchange money.

And Symony because you are a flie fellow and haue your tongue liberal,

I will place you ouer such matters as are Ecclesiasticall.

And though I appoint sundry offices where now you are in,

Yet iopntly I meane to vse you together oft times in one thing:

Lady we rest at your commaund in ought we can or may.

All

Lucar.

Then Maister Daup to my Pallas haste thee awaie,  
And will crautie Conueyaunce my Butler to make readie,

The



## of the three Ladies of London.

The best fare in my house to welcome thee and thy  
companye.

But staye Disimulation, I my selfe will go with thee  
Gentlemen Ile goe before, but pray in any case:  
So soone as ye please velcome to my place.

Exeunt, Dissim. & Lucar.

I warrant you Ladie, we will not long absent be,  
Fellow Symonie this tell out part, so well as heart could wish,  
We are cunning Anglers, we haue caught the fattest fish.  
I perceiue it is true that her graundmother couid,  
Here is good to be done, by vse of siluer and gould:  
And such I am so wel settled in this Countrey,  
I wil pinche al, riche and poore that come to me.

Symo.  
Vlery.

And sirra when I was at Rome, and dwelt in the Friarie,  
They would talk how England yearly sent ouer a great masse of monie:  
And that this little Iland was more worth to the Pope,  
Then three bigger Realmes, which had a great deale more scope.  
For here were inoke pence, Peter pence, and Do yle pence to be paide,  
Besides muche other money that to the Popes vse was made:  
Why it is but lately, since the Pope receiued this fine,  
Not muche more then 26. yeares, it was in Queene Maries time.  
But I thinke England had neuer knowne what this geare had ment,  
If Frier Iusten from the Pope had not hither bene sent:  
For the Pope hearing it to be a little Iland, sent him with a great  
armie ouer.

Symo.

And winning the victorie, hee landed about Rye, Sandwicke  
or Dover.

Then he erected Lawes, hauing the people in subiection,  
So for the most part, England hath paide tribute so long:  
I hearing of the great store, and wealth in the Countrey,  
Could not chuse but perswade my selfe the people loved Symonie.

But staye your talke till some other time, we forget my Ladie.

Vlery.  
Symo.

Of troth you say true: for he had vs make haste,

But my talke me thought saoured well, and had a good taste.

Exeunt ambo.

Enter Mercadore like an Italian Merchant.

Merca.

I iudge in my minde a dat me be not bare farr  
From da place where dwells my Lady Lucar:  
But he come an shently mane a soe he doe.

Enter Disimulation.

Shentleman, I prais you heartily let me speake you,  
Pray you doe you not know a shentleman dat Maister Dany doe call?  
Yea mary doe I, I am he, and what would you withall?  
Goda my friend Maister Dany, help me I pray you hartily,  
For a summa acquaintance a with Madona Lucar your Lady:

Dissim.  
Merca.

B.ii.

Sir



## A pithie and pleasaunt Comedie

Sir vpon condition, I will therfore I would you should know,  
 That on me and my fellows you must largely bestow:  
 Whose names are Fraud, Ulerp, and Symony men of great credite and  
 And to get my Ladies good will and theirs it is no small thing: (calling  
 But tell me can you be content to winne Lucar by Dissimulation?

Merca. A good a my friend doe axa me no shush a question,  
 For he dat will liue in the world, must be of the world sure,  
 And de world will laue his own, so long as the world indure.

Enter Lucar.

Dissim. I commend your wit Sir, but here comes my Lady.

Merca. Come hither heers to tres Crownes for de speke me.

Dissim. Well sir I thanke you, I will goe speake for you.

Lucar. Maister Daup Dissimulation what new acquaintance haue ye gottē

Dissim. Such a one Madam that vnto your state hath great care: (there,

And surely in my minde the Gentleman is worthie,

Lucar. To be well thought on for his liberalitie, bountie, & great care to seek pe.

Merca. Gentleman you are hartly welcome, howe are you called, I pray you

Lucar. Madona, me be a Merchant and be cald senior Merchadozus. (tell vs:

Merca. But I pray you tell me what Countreman.

Lucar. Me be Madona an Italian.

Merca. Yet let me trouble ye, I beseeche ye whence came ye?

Lucar. For sarua boutra boungrace, me come from Turkie.

Merca. Gramercie, but senior Merchadoze dare you not to vndertake,

Lucar. Secretlie to conuey good commodities out of this countrey for my sake?

Lucar. Madona, me doe for loue of you tinck no paine to mush,

And to doe any ting for you me will not grush:

We will forsake a my Faber, Moder, King, Countrey & moze den dat.

We will lie and forswear me selfe for a quarter so much as my hat.

What is dat for loue of Lucar me dare or will not doe:

We care not for all the world, the great Deuill, nay make my God angry  
 for you.

You say well Merchadozus, yet Lucar by this is not thorowly wonne,

Lucar. But geue care and I will shew, what by theer must be done:

Thou must carry ouer Wheats, Peale, Barly, Dates, and Fitches and  
 all kinde of graine,

Whiche is well sould beyond sea, and bying suche Merchantes great  
 gaine.

Then thou must carie beside Leather, Tallow, Beeffe, Bacon, Belmettell  
 and euery thing.

And for these good commodities, trifles to Englande thou must  
 bying.

As Bugles to make babies, coloured bones, glasse, beades, to make brace-  
 lettes withall:

For enery day Gentlewomen of England doe aske for suche trifles from  
 stall to stall.

And you must bying moze, as Amber, Ieat, Copall, Chyristall, and euery  
 such vable,

That



of the three Ladies of London.

That is slight, prettie and pleasant, they care not to haue it profitable.  
And if they demand wherefoze your wares and merchandize agree,  
You must say I eat wil take ty a strawe, Amber wil make one fat,  
Coprall will looke pale when you be sick, and Chyshall wil staunch blood.  
So with lying, flattering, and glosing you must bitter your ware,  
And you shall winne me to your will, if you can decentfully sweare.

Thinke ye not dat me haue carried ouer cozne, Cedar, Beefe and Bacon Merca.  
too all tis while:

And brought hedar many bables dese cuntry men to beguile?  
Yes, shall me tell you Hadona, me and my cuntrinans haue sent ouer,  
bell mettell for make ordinance, yea and ordinance it selfe beside,  
Dat my cuntry, and oder cuntries be so well furnisht as dis cuntry,  
and has neuer beene spide.

How I perceiue you loue me, and if you continue in this still, Lucar.  
You shall not onely be with me, but command me when & where you wil.

Lady, for to do all dis, and moze for you, me be content: Merca.  
But I thinke some shall knaue will put a bill in da Parliament.  
For dat such a tings shall not be brought here.

Cush Mercadoze, I warrant thee, thou needest not to feare: Lucar.

What and one do: there is some other will flatter and say,  
They do no hurt to the cuntry, and with a sleight fetch that bill away.

And if they do not so, that by acte of Parliament it be past,  
I know you Merchants haue many a sleight and subtil cast.

So that you will by stealth bring ouer great stowe:

And say it was in the Realme a long time befoze.

For being so many of these trifles here as there are at this day,

You may increase them at pleasure. when you send ouer sea.

And do but giue the searcher an odde bribe in his hand,

I warrant you he will let you scape roundly with such things in and out

But Senior Mercadoze, I pray you walke in with me, (the land

And as I find you kind to me, so wil I fauour ye.

We tanke my good Lady, But M. Dissimulation, here is for your  
fellowes, fraude, Usury, and Symony, and say me giue it dem.

Merca.

Exeunt Lucar and Mercadoze.

I mary Sir, these bribes haue bene,  
Good faith I perceine Dissimulation, fraud, Usurie, and Symony shall Dissim.  
In spite of Loue & Conscience, though their harts it doth greue. (line,  
Was maisters, he that cannot lie, cog, dissemble, and flatter now a daies,  
Is not worthe to liue in the world, nor in the Court to haue praise.

¶ Enter Artifex an Artificer.

I beseech you good M. Dissimulation, befriend a poore man,  
To serue Lady Lucar, and sure sir ile consider it hereafter if I can,

Artif. x.

What consider me: dost thou thinke that I am a bribe taker?  
Faith it lies not in me to further thy matter.

Dissim.

Good M. Dissimulation helpe me, I am almost quite vndone,  
But yet my liuing hitherto with good Conscience I haue wonne.  
But my true working, my early rising, and my late going to bed,

Artifex,



## A pithie and pleasant Comedie

As I am able to find my selfe, wife and children dye bread:  
 For there be such a sort of strangers in this cuntry,  
 That worke fine to please the e.e, though it be deceitfully,  
 And that which is slight, and seemes to the eie well,  
 Shall sooner then a peece of good worke be proffered to sell.  
 And our english men be growne so foolish and nice,  
 That they will not giue a peny above the ordinarie price.

Dissem. Faith I cannot helpe that, tis my fellow Fraude must pleasure that,  
 Here comes my fellow Fraud, speake to him, and ile do what I can.

¶ Enter Fraude.

Artif x. I beseech you be good vnto me right honest Gentleman.

Fraude. Why and whereto? What wouldst thou haue me do?

Artifex. That my poore estate you will so much prefer:

As to get me to be a workman to Lady Lucar.

And Sir I doubt not but to please you so well for your paine,

That you shal thinke very well of me, if I in her seruice remaine.

Dissem. Good fellow Fraude do so much, for I see he is very willing to line,

And some peece of worke to thee for thy paines he will giue.

Fraud. Well vpon that condition I will, but I care not so much for his gifts,

As that he will by my name declare how he came by his great thifts.

And that he will sette out in euery kind of thing,

That fraud is a good husband, and great profit both bring.

Therefore the next peece of worke that thou doest make,

Let me see how deceitfull thou wilt do it for my sake.

Artifex. Yes sir I will sir, of that be you sure,

Ile honoz your name, while life doth endure.

Fraud. Fellow fraud, here comes a Citizen as I deeme.

Fraude. Nay rather a Lawier, or some petty fogger he doth seme.

¶ Enter a Lawyer.

Lawyer. Gentlemen, my earnest suite is to desire you,

That vnto your Ladies seruice you would helpe me:

For I am an Attorney of the Law, and pleader at the Bar,

And haue a great desire to plead for Ladie Lucar.

I haue bene earnest Sir, as is needfull in such a case,

For feare an other come before me, and obtaine my place.

I haue pleaded for Loue and Conscience till I was wearie,

I had manie Cyants, and manie matters, that made my purse light, and  
 my hart heauie.

Therefore let them pleade for Conscience that list for me,

Ile plead no more for such as brings nothing but beggerie.

Dissem. Sir vpon this condition that you will keepe men in the Law,

Ten or twelue pennes for matters that are not worth a straw.

And that you will make an ill matter seme good, and firmable in dede,

Faith I am content for my part you shall speede.

Fraude. Nay fellow, thou knowest that Symony & Usury hath an ill matter in  
 Now if thou canst handell the matter so subtil & fine, (law at this time,



## of the three Ladies of London.

Is to pleade that ill matter good and firmable at the Bar,  
Then thou shalt shew thy selfe worthe to win Lady Lucar.  
Therefore tell me if you can and will do it or no.

If you do it, be sure to get my Ladies good will ere you goe.

By my honestie well remembred, I had quite forgot,  
Tis about that, a fortnight ago sell out the matter I wot.

Tush Sir, I can make blacke white, and whire blacke againe,  
But he that will be a Lawyer, must have a thousand waies to saue.  
And manie times we Lawyers do one befre and an other,  
And let good matters slip, but we agree like brother and brother.  
Why Sir what shall let vs to swest and turne the Law as we list?  
Seeing we haue them printed in the palmes of our list.

Therefore doubt you not, but make bold report,  
That I came, and wil plead their ill cause in good kind of sort.

O troth how likest thou this fellow Dissimulation?

Mary I like him wel, he is a cunning Clarke, and one of our professiō.  
But come Sir go with vs and we wil prefer you.

Good M. Fraud remember me.

Leaue thy prating, I will I tell thee

Good M. Dissimulation thinke on m?

Thou art too importunate and greedie.

Come after dinner, or some other time when we are at leysure.

Dissim. Fraud. and Lawyer exeunt.

Come a'ter dinner or some other time, I thinke so indeed,  
For full litle do they thinke of a poore mans need.

These fellows will do nothing for pittie and leue,  
And thise happy are they that hath no need them to proue.

God he knowes the world is growne to such a stay,  
That men must vse Fraud and Dissimulation too, or beg by the way.  
Therefore ile do as the most doth, the fewest shall laugh me to scorn,  
And be a fellow amongst good fellows to hold by S. Lukes heyne.

Exit.

Enter Simplicite and Sinceritie.

Good coossen Simplicite do some what for me.

Yes faith coossen Sinceritie, ile do any thing for thee.

What wouldst for me do for thee canst tell that?

Mas I cannot tell what shouldst do for me, except thou wouldst giue  
me a new hat.

Alas I am not able to giue thee a new.

Why I marvel then how thou dost dee.

Dost thou get thy liuing amongst beggars from doore to doore?

Indeed coossen Sinceritie, I had thought thou wast not so poore.

Nay coossen Simplicite, I got my liuing hardly, but yet I hope tust,  
And with good Conscience too, although I am restrained from my lust,  
But this is it coossen Simplicite, I would request you to do for me:  
Which is, to get Lady Loue, and Lady Conscience hand to a letter:  
That by their meanes I may get some Benefice to make mee liue the  
better.

Yes Ile doe so much for thee coossen, but hast thou any more?

B.iii.

3

Dissim.

Lawier

Fraude.

Dissim.

Artifer.

Fraude.

Artifer.

Dissim.

Fraude.

Artifer.

Sincer.

Sympli.

Sincer.

Simpli.

Sincer.]

Simpli.



# A pithie and pleasant Comœdie

Sincer. I, behold, they are ready drawne, if assured they were.

¶ Let Simplicite make as though he read it, and looke quite  
ouer, meane while let Conscience enter.

Sympli. Let me see cossen, for I can reade:

Was tis brauely done, didst thou it in deede?

Mistrus Conscience, I haue a matter to bequest you too.

Consci. What ist: I doubt not but tis some wise thing if it be for you.

Simpli. Mary my cossen Sinceritie, was before to scribe these papers here,  
That he may get some preferment, but I know not where.

Consci. Be these your letters: what would you haue me do, and how shal I cal  
Sincer. Lady, my name is Sinceritie. (poe)

Consci. And from whence come ye?

Sincer. I came from Oxford: but in Cambridge I,

hauing nothing, thought good if I could, to make better my state.

But if I had in steade of Diuinitie, the Lawe, Astronomie, Astrologie,

Physiognomie, Palmestrie, Arithmetike, Logicke, Musicke, Physicke, or  
any such thing,

I had not doubted then, but to haue had some better living.

But Diuines that preach the word of God sincerely and truly,

Are in these dayes little or nothing at all set by.

God grant the good Preachers be not taken away for our vnthankfulness,

There is neuer moze preaching and lesse following, the people liue so  
am

But what is he y may not on the sabboth day attend to heare Gods word?

But we wil rather runne to bowles, sit at the alehouse, then one houre at

Telling a tale of Robin hode, sitting at Cardes, playing at  
kettels, or els some other vaine thing: (word:

That I feare Gods vengeance on our heades it will bring,

God graunt amendment, but Lady Conscience I pray,

In my behalfe vnto Lucar do what ye may.

Simpli. Was my cossen can say his booke well, I had not thought it,

Wes worthy to haue a Benefice, and it will hit.

Consci. God be blessed Sinceritie, for the good comfort I haue of thee:

I would it lay in vs to pleasure such beleue me.

We will do what we can: But ultra posse non est esse, you know,

It is Lucar that hath brought vs poore soules so low.

For we haue sold our house, we are brought so poore:

And feare by her mostly to be shut out of doore.

Yet to subscribe our name we will with all our hart,

Perchaunce for our sakes some thing he will impart.

Come hither Simplicite, let me write on thy backe.

Simpli. Here is the right picture of that fellow that sits in the corner.

¶ Enter Hospitalitie while she is a writing.

Hospi. Lady, me thinkes you are busie.

Consci. I haue done sir, I was setting my hand to a letter to Lucar for our  
trand



of the three Ladies of London,

second Sinceritie.

But I would Ladie Loue were here too.

She is at home with me, but if you please so much in her behalf I wil' Hospi.  
I pray hartily, and it shall suffice the turne well inow: (do. Consci.

Good Simplicite, once more thy bodie do bow.

I thinke I shall serue to be a washing blocke for you.

Simpli

I would do it for you, but I am afraid yonder boy will mocke me.

Hospi.

No I warrant thee.

Consci.

Here take thy letters Sinceritie, and I wish them prosperous to thee.

Sincer.

I yeld you most hartie thanks my good Ladie.

Hospi.

Ladie Conscience, please it you to waite home to dinner with me?

Conl.

I geue you thanks my good friend Hospitalitie.

But I pray you sir, haue you invited to dinner any stranger?

Hospi.

No sure, none but Lady Loue, and 3. or 4. honest neighbors.

Simpli

Was my Ladie is gotten to dinner already,

I beleue she rose at ten a clocke she is so hungrie.

What and I should come to dinner, hast thou any good cheere?

Hospi.

I haue bread and beere, one ioint of meat, and welcome thy best fare.

Simpli.

Why, art thou called Hospitalitie, and hast no better cheere then that?

I tell thee, if thou hast no more meat for so manie, theie nere be fat.

What if my cossen. nay I my selfe alone, to dinner should come?

Where should my Lady and the rest dine: for I could eate vp every crum.

Thou art an olde miser, deest thou kepe no better fare in thy house?

Hast no greate Bagge Pudding, nor Hogges face, that is called  
Sowse?

My frände, Hospitalitie doth not consist in great fare and banqueting, Hospi.

But in doing good vnto the Poore, and to yelde them some refreshing.

Therefore if thou and Sinceritie will come and take part,

Such as I haue I will geue you with a free and willing hart.

Exeunt Hospitalitie and Conscience.

He speaks well cossen. lets go to dinner with him.

Simpli.

The olde man shall not thinke but we will pleasure him.

Faith he might haue richer fellows, then we to take his part,

But he shall neuer haue better eating fellows if he woulde excite his  
hart.

Here be them will eate with the proudest of them.

I am sure my mother said I could eate so much as five men.

Nay I haue a gift for eating I tell yee.

For our Maides would neuer beleue I put all the meate in my bellie.

But I haue spide a knaue, my Ladie Lucars cogging man,

Geue me your letters cossen, I prefer yee if I can.

Enter Dissimulation.

Dissimulation, out vpon him, he shall be no spokesman for me.

Sincer.

Why then you are a foole cossen Sinceritie,

Simpli

Geue me am, I tell yee, I know hele do it for me.

C.

Saying



## A pithie and pleasant Comoedie

- Sinceri. Seeing thou wilt haue it, here receiue it, but yet it greenes my hart,  
That this dissembling wretch should speake on my part.
- Simpli. Heare ye sir, I would bequest to liue this letter,  
To your good whole some mistris Ladie Lucar.
- Diffim. Where hadst thou it tell me?
- Simpli. Marie of my cosen Sinceritie.
- Diffim. Why I haue nothing to do in it, tis not to me thou shouldst come,  
I haue not to doe with Sincerities matters, tis my fellowe Symonies  
come.
- Sinceri. Thou art a kinne to the Lawyer, thou wilt doe nothing without a fee,  
But thou, fraude, Murie, noz yet Symonie, shall doe nothing for me.  
And thou wilt do it do it, and thou wilt not chuse,  
Both thee and their dealing I hate and refuse.
- Diffim. Why, and I am not bound to thee so farre as knaue goe,  
And therefore in despite of thee and thy cosen there thy letters be,  
What thinkest thou by captious words to make me doo it?  
Let them deliuer your Letters that hath a stomacke to it.
- Simpli. Faith cosen hes such a testren and proud sembling knaue,  
That hele do nothing les some byberie he haue.  
Thers a great many such promoting knaues, that gets their liuing,  
With nothing els but facing, lying, swearing, and flattering.  
Why he has a face like a blacke Dogge, and blusseth like the backe side  
of a chimney,  
Twas not for nothing thy Godfathers a cogging name gaue thee.

### ¶ Enter Ladie Lucar.

- But here comes his Mistresse Ladie Lucar,  
Now cosen Ile liue your letter.  
Mistresse Lady Lucar heres a letter for ye.
- Lucar. Hast thou a letter for me?
- Simpli. I by Saint Marie.  
How say you cosen, she reades your letter?  
And you can flatter perhaps ye shall speede better.
- Sinceri. Thou speakest the truth Simplicite, for flatterers nowe a daies,  
Liue Gentlemen-like, and with prating get praise.
- Lucar. Sit, I haue read the tenure of your letter, wherein I finde,  
That at the request of Loue and Conscience I should shew my self kind  
In bestowing some spirituall liuing on ye, parsonage, or Benefice,  
It seemes it stands greatly in neede, as appeeres by this.  
And trust me I would do for you, but it lies not in mee,  
For I haue referred all such matters to my seruant Symonie.  
You must speake to him, and if you can get his good will,  
Then be sure of mine, their minds to fulfill.
- Since. Ladie, I shall neuer get his good will, because I want abilitie,  
For he will do nothing except I bring monie.  
And if you graunt it not, then tis past all doubt,  
I shall be neuer the better, but go quite without.
- Diffim. Madam, I can tell what you may giue,



of the three Ladies of London,

Not hurting your selfe whereby he may live.

And without my fellowe Symonies consent,

If to followe my minde you are anie whit bent.

Wray thee what is it: for thou knowest while for their house I am in bargaining, Lucar.

And it be neuer so little, I must see me to do some thing.

Why, haue not you the parsonage of S. Nichil to bestowe? Disim.

If you giue him that, Symonie shall neuer knowe.

Indeed thou saiest true: I haue here Sinceritie, Lucar.

Loe, for their sakes I will bestowe frankly on thee.

Ile giue thee the Parsonage of S. Nichil, to pleasure them withall,

And such an other to it, if thou watch till it fall.

My Ladie axes you when you will take possession of your house, and lend the rest of the money. Simpli.

What are they so hastie: belike they spent it merily.

Faith no, for they would eate it if they could get it, when they are a hungrie. Lucar. Simpli.

But you may be happie, for you haue sped well to day, (speaking to Sinceritie.

You may thanke God and good companie that you came this way.

The Parsonage of S. Michels, bir Ladie if you haue nothing els,

You shall be sure of a living, beside a good ring of Bels.

Cossen ile tel thee what thou shalt do, sell the bels, and make monie.

Thou maiest well be Simplicitie, for thou shewest thy follie. Sincer.

I haue a Parsonage, but what: of S. Nichil, and Nichil is nothing,

Then where is the Church, or any Bells for to ring?

Thou vnderstandest her not, she was set for to flout,

I thought comming in their names I should go without.

It is easie to see that Lucar loues not Loue and Conscience:

But God I trust will one day peld her iust recompence.

Cossen, you saide that some thing to me you would giue, Simpli.

When you had gotten preferment of Lucar to liue:

And I trust you will remember your poore cossen Simplicitie,

You know to Lady Conscience and ery bodie I did speake for you.

Good Simplicitie holde thy peace, my state is yet naught, Sincer.

I will helpe thee sure, if euer I get ought.

But here comes Sir Nicholas Nemo, to him I will go,

And see if for their sakes he will any thing bestow.

Enter Sir Nicholas Nemo.

You come from Loue and Conscience, as seemeth me here, Nemo.

My speciall good friends, whome I account of most deere.

And you are called Sinceritie, your state shewes the same:

You are welcome to me for their sakes, and for your owne name.

And for their sakes you shall see what I will do for you,

Without Disimulation, fraude, Usurie, or Symonie:

For they will do nothing without some kind of gaine,

Such cankered corruption in their hearts doth remaine.

But come in to dinner with me, and when you haue dinde,

C.ij.

you



## A pittie and pleasant Comœdie

- you shall haue. Presently go out.
- Sinceri. You shall haue, but what? a liuing that is blowne downe with the winde.
- Simpli. Now coulde I dismember your friends, seeing two linings you haue. One that this man promist, and an other that Lady Lucar gaue. Had you be a tolly man, and you had thre or foure more, Lets beg apace coulde and we shall get great stoze. Do thou get some more letters, and we get them scribed of Mistris Lons and Conscience, And wele go beg linings together, wele beg no small pence. How saiest thou coulde Sinceritie, wut do so much, If we can speake faire and semble, we shalbe plague rich.
- Sinceri. Good Simplicite content thee, I am neuer the better for this, I must of force leaue off, for I see how vaine it is. It bootes not Sinceritie to lue for releefe, So few regard that to me is a grafe. This was Nicholas Nemo, and no man hath no place, Then how can I speake well in this heauie case. If no man bid me to dinner, when shall I dine? Or how shall I finde him, where, when, and at what time? Wherefore the reliefe I haue had, and shall haue, is small, But to speake truth, the reliefe is nothing at all. But come Simplicite, let vs go see what may bee had, Sinceritie in these daies was sure bozne to be sad.
- Simpli. Come lets go to dinner coulde, for the Gentleman I think hath almost dinde. But and I get vittals enough, I warrant you I will not be behinde.
- Since. What if thou canst not get it, then how wilt thou eate?
- Simpli. Mery on this fashion, with both handes at once, ye shall see when I get meate.
- Sinceri. Why his name was Nemo, and Nemo hath no being.
- Simpli. I beleue coulde you be not hungrie, that you stand prating. Faith we go do him a pleasure, because he hath neede, Why and he will needes haue his meate eate, a shall see how we fede. I beleue he will not bid me come againe to him, Was and he do, a shall find a fellow that has his eating.
- Exeunt ambo.

Enter Vsurie and Conscience.

- Vsurie. Lady Conscience, is there any bodie within your house can you tell?
- Consci. There is no bodie at all be ye sure, I know certainly well.
- Vsurie. You know when one comes to take possession of any peece of Land, There must not bee one within, for against the order of Lawe it doth stand. Therefore I thought good to aske you, but I praye you thinke not amisse: For bothe you, and almost all others knowes, that an olde custome it is.
- Ven



of the three Ladies of London.

You say truth, take possession when you please, good leave I render ye, Consci.  
Doubt you not, there is neither man, woman nor child, that will or  
shall hinder you.

Why then I will be bould to enter.

Exit.

Vlery.

Who is more bould then Vlery to venter?

Consci.

He maketh the matter dangerous where is no neede at all,  
But he thinks it not perillous to seeke euery mans fall:  
Both he and Lucar hath so pincht vs, we know not what to doe,  
Were it not for Hospitalitie, we knewe not whither to goe.  
Great is the miserie that we poore Ladies abide,  
And much more is the crueltie of Lucar and Vlery beside.  
O Conscience thou art not accounted of, O Loue thou art little set by,  
For almost euery one, true loue, and pure conscience doth deny:  
So hath Lucar crept into the bosome of man, woman, and child,  
That euery one doth practise his deare friend to beguile.  
But God graunt Hospitalitie be not by them ouerpreit,  
In whome all our staie and chiefest comfort doth rest:  
But Vlery hates Hospitalitie, and cannot him aside,  
Because he for the poore and comfortlesse doth prouide.  
Here he comes, that hath vndone many an honest man,  
And daily seekes to destroy, deface, and bring to ruine if he can.  
Now sir, haue you taken possession as your deare Lady would you?

Enter Vsurie.

I haue done it, and I thinke you haue receaued your money,  
But this to you: my Lady would me to bid you prouide some other house  
out of hand.

Vlery.

For she would not by her will, haue Loue and Conscience to dwell in  
her land.

Therefore I would wish you to prouide ye,  
So ye should saue charges, for a lesse house may serue.

I pray you hartily let vs staie there, and we wil be content  
To geue you ten pound a yeare, which is the olde rent.

Consci.

Tenne pound a yeare, that were a stale least:

Vlery.

If I should take the olde rent to follow your request,  
May after fortie pounde a yeare, you shall haue it for a quarter:

And you may thinke too, I greatly befriended ye in this matter:

But no longer then for a quarter to you ile set it,

For perhaps my Ladie shall sell it, or els to some other will let: r:

Well, sith we are driuen to this hard and bitter drift,  
We accept, it and are contented to make bare and hard shift.

Consci.

Then get you gone, and see at a day your rent be readie.

Vsurie.

We must haue patience perforce seeing there is no remedie.

Consci.

Exit Conscience.

What a foole was I, it repentes me I haue let it so reasonable,  
I might so well haue had after threescore, as such a trifle:

Vlery.

For



## A pithie and pleasaunt Comoedie

For seeing they were distressed, they would haue geuen largely.  
I was a right sot, but it be ouerscene no moze belene me.

Enter Mercadore.

Merca. Th my good a friend a maister Userie, be my trot you be very well  
mette:  
He be muche behoulding vnto you for your good will, me be in your  
debt.  
But a me take a your part so much against a scalde olde chyrle called  
Hospitalite:  
Did speake against you, and sayes you bzing good honest men to beg-  
gerie.  
Vfury. I thanke Sir, did he speake suche euill of me as you now say:  
Merca. I doubt not but to reward him for his trecherie one day.  
Vfury. But I pray tell a me how fare a my Ladie all dis while?  
Merca. Marie verie Sir, and here she comes if my selfe I do not beguile.

Enter Lucar.

Lucar. What seneoz Mercadore I haue not seene you many a day,  
I marvel what is the cause you kept so lonh a way?  
Merca. Shall me say to you Madama dat me haue had much businesse for you  
in hand,  
For send away good commodities out of dis little Countrey Eng-  
land:  
We haue nowe sent ouer Brasse, Copper, Pewter, and many odat  
ting:  
And for dat me shall ha for Gentlewomans fine trilles, that great pro-  
fite will bzing.  
Lucar. I perccause you haue bene mindefull of me for whiche I thanke  
pee:  
Vfury. But Userie tell me, how haue you spedde in that you went about?  
Indifferently Lady; you neede not to doubt,  
I haue taken possession, and because they were destitute:  
I haue let it for a quarter my tale to conclude.  
Harry I haue a little raised the rent, but it is but after forty pound by  
the yeare:  
Lucar. But if it were to let now, I would let it moze deare.  
Indeede tis but a trifle, it makes no matter,  
Merca. I force it not greatly, being but for a quarter.  
Madona me tell ye dat you shall doe, let dem to straunger dat are  
content  
To dwell in a little roome, and to pay muche rent:  
For you know da french mans and fleminges in dis countrey be many,  
So dat they make shifte to dwell ten houses in one very gladly:  
And be content a for pay fiftie or threc scoze pound a yeare,  
Lucar. For dat whiche da English mans say twenty marke is to deare.  
Why sexioz Mercadore thinke yen not that I

Haue



## of the three Ladies of London,

Have infinite numbers in London that my want doth supply.  
Beside in Bristol, Northampton, Norwich, Welshester, Canterbury,  
Dover, Sandwich, Rie, Porchmouth, Pluminoth, and many moe,  
That great rentes vpon little roome doe bestow.

Yes I warrant you, and truly I may thanke the straungers for this,  
That they haue made houses so deare, whereby I liue in blisse.

But sennoz Mercadoze, dare you to trauell vnder take:

And goe amongst the Moyses, Turkes, and Pagans for my sake?

Madona, me dare a goe to de Turkes, Moyses, Paganes and  
more too.

Merca.

What doe me care and me goe to da great deuill for you?

Commaund a me Madam, and you shall see plaine,

Data for your sake me refuse a no paine.

Lucar.

Then sennoz Mercadoze I am soorthwith to send ye  
from hence, to search for some new toyes in Barbary or Turkey,

Such trifles as you thinke will please wantons best:

For you know in this Countrey tis their chiefest request.

Merca.

Indeede de Gentlewoman here buy so much vaine toyes,

Dat me straungers laugh a to tinke wherein day haue their Ioyes:

Fayt Madona me will searche all da straunge countreys me can tell,

But me will haue such tinges dat please dese Gentlewomans well.

Lucar.

Why then let vs prouide thinges readie to haste you away.

Merca.

I voutra commaundamento Madona me obay.

Exeunt.

Enter Symony and Peter please man like a Parson.

Now proceede with your tale and ile heare thee.

Symo.

And so fir as I was about to tell you:

Peter.

This same Plesco, and this same Cracko be both my parishioners now,

And fir they sell out meruailously together about you:

The same Cracko tooke your part, and said that the Clergie

Was vpholden by you, and maintained very worshipfully:

So fir, Plesco he woulde not graunt that in no case,

But said that you did corrupt the clergy, and dishonor that holy place.

Now fir I was wearie to heare them at such great strife,

For I loue to please men so long as I haue life:

Therefore I beseeche your maister ship to speake to Lady Lucar,

That I may be her Chaplin, or els to serue her.

Sym.

What is your name?

Peter.

Sir Peter.

Symo.

What more?

Peter.

Forsooth Pleaseman.

Symo.

Then your name is fir Peter Pleaseman.

Peter.

I forsooth.

Symo.

And please woman too now and then.

Peter.

You know that homo is indifferent.

Symo.

Now surely a good scholler in my iudgement.

I pray at what Vniuersitie were ye?

Peter.

Of no Vniuersitie truly:

C. lxxx.

Mary



## A pithie and pleasaunt Comcedie

Mary I haue gone to schoole in a Colledge, where I haue studied  
two or a three places of Dinitie:

Symo.

And all for Lady Lucars sake, for you may steadfastly beleue me.

Peter.

May I beleue ye, but of what religion are you can ye tell?

Sym.

Mary sir of all religions, I know not my selfe very well.

Peter.

You are a Protestant now, and I thinke so that you will graunt.  
Indeede I haue bene a Catholicke, mary nowe for the most part a  
Protestant.

But and if my seruice may please her, harke in your care sir,  
I warrant you my Religion shall not offend her.

Symo.

You say well, but if I helpe you to suche great pferment,  
Would you be willing, that for my paine I shall haue yearely hale the  
gaine.

For it is reason you know, that if I help you to a liuing,  
That you should vnto me be somewhat beholding.

Peter.

I sir and reason good, Ile be as your maister ship please.  
I care not what you doe, so I may liue at ease.

Symo.

Then this man is answered: Sir Peter please man, come in  
with me.

Peter.

And ile pferre ye straight way to my Ladie.

Oh Sir I thanke ye.      Exeunt.

Enter Simplicie, with a basket on his Arme.

Simpli.

You thinke I am going to market to buy roste meat, do ye not?  
I thought so, but you are deceiued: for I wot what I wot.  
I am neither going to the Butchers to buy Meale, Mutton, or Beefe,  
But I am going to a bloudsucker, and who is it: faith I serie that  
theefe.  
Why sir, twas no marckle he vndood my father that was called  
plaine dealing.  
When he has vndone my Lady and Conscience too with his bsering.  
Ile tell ye sir, trust him not, for heie flatter bonacion and soze,  
Till he has gotten the Bakers vantage, then heie turne you out of doore.

Enter Dissimulation.

Dissim.

Simplicie, now of my honestie very heartily well met.

Simpli.

What Semblacion sweare not, for thou swearest by that thou couldst  
not get.

Thou haue honestie now: thy honestie is quite gone:

Mary thou hadst honestie at xi. of the clock, and went from thee at none:

Why how canst thou haue honestie, when it dare not come nye thee:

I warrant Semblacion: hee that has lesse honestie then thou may deie  
thee:

Thou hast honestie irreuerence, come out dogge, where art thou:

Even as must honestie as had my mothers great hoggish sow:

No faith thou maist put out my eye with honestie, and thou hadst it here,

Maist not left it at the Alehouse, in gage for a pot of strong beere:

May



## of the three Ladies of London,

Pray thee leaue prating Simplicitee, and tell me what thou hast there? Dissim.  
 Why, tis nothing for thee, thou doest not deale with such kind of ware. Simpli.  
 Sirra there is no beceite in a bagge pudding, is there: no? in a plaine  
 pudding thy:

But there is beceite and knauerie too in thy fellowe that is called Usurie.  
 Sirra Ile tell thee, I wounot tell thee,, and yet Ile tell thee, nowe I  
 member me too:

Canst tell, or wouldst thou knowe whither with this parliament I go?  
 Faith euen to such will thy fellowe Usury I am sent,  
 With my Ladie Loues gowne, and Lady Conscience too, for a quarters  
 rent.

Alas paye Ladie Loue, art thou drinen so lower? Dissim.  
 Some little pittance on thee Ile bestowe.

Holde Simplicitee, carrie her thre or foure Duckats from me,  
 And commend me to her euen berie hartly.

Ducke egges, yes Ile carrie am, and twere as many as this woulde Simpli.  
 holde:

Cush thou knowest not what I meane, take this, tis golde. Dissim.

Was tis golde in deede, why, wilt sende awaie thy golde, hast no moze Simpli.  
 neede?

I thinke thou art growne plague rich with thy dissembling trade,  
 But ile carrie my Lady the golde, for this will make her well apaide.

And sirra, carrie Lady Loues gowne backe againe, for my fellowe Dissim.  
 Usurie

Shall not haue her gowne, I am sure so much he will befreend mee. Simpli.

But what shall Conscience gowne doe, shall I carrie that backe againe Dissim.

Pray, let Conscience gowne and skin to Usurie go. (too?)

I no body cared for Conscience moze then I,

They would hang her by like Bacon in a chimney to drie.

Faith I told thee thou caredst not for Conscience nor honestie: Simpli.

I thinke in deede it will neuer be the death of thee.

But Ile go conspach my arrant so soone as I can I tell ye,

For now I ha gold, I would faine haue some good meat in my bellie.

Exit.

Pray Ile hie me after, that I may send backe Ladie Loues gowne, Dissim.

For I would not haue Loue bought quite out of towne.

Mary for Conscience tut, I care not two strawes,

Why I should take care for her, I know no kind of cause.

Exit.

¶ Enter Hospitalitie.

Oh what shall I say: Usurie hath vndone me, and nowe he hates mee Hospi.  
 to the death,

And seeks by all meanes possible for to bereaue me of bzeath.

I cannot rest in anie place, but he hunts and followes me euerie where,

That I know no place to abide, I lue so much in feare.

But out alas, here comes he that will shorten my daies.

¶ Enter Vsurie.

D.

O heue



## A pitie and pleasant Comoedie

Usurie.

O haue I caught your olde gray bearde, you be the man to whom the people so praise:  
You are a franke Gentleman, and full of liberallitie,  
Why, who had al the praise in London or England, but M. Hospitalitie?  
But Ile waite for a nowe Ile holde you a groat.

Hospi.

What will you kill me?

Usury.

No, Ile do nothing but cut thy throat.

Hospi.

O helpe, helpe, helpe, for Gods sake.

### ¶ Enter Conscience running apace

Consci.

What lamentable crie was that I heard one make?

Hospi.

O Ladie Conscience, now or neuer helpe me.

Consci.

Why, what wilt thou do with him Usurie?

Usury.

What will I do with him? mary cut his throat, and then no more.

Consci.

O dost thou not consider that thou shalt daerely answer for Hospitalitie that good member, refraine it therefore.

Usury.

Refraine me no refraining, nor answer mee no answering,

Consci.

The matter is answered well enough in this thing.

Usury.

For Gods sake spare him, for cuntry sake spare him, for pittie sake spare him, for Loue sake spare him, for Conscience sake forbear him.

Consci.

Let cuntry, pittie, Loue, Conscience, and all go in respect of my selfe, He shall die, come ye feeble wretch, Ile drasse ye like an elfe.

Consci.

But yet Usurie, consider the lamentable crie of the poore, For lacke of Hospitalitie, fatherles children are turned out of doore. Consider againe the complaint of the sicke, blind and lame, That will cry vnto the Lorde for vengeance on thy head in his name. Is the feare of God so farre from thee that thou hast no feeling at all? O repent Usurie, leaue Hospitalitie, and for mercie at the Lordes hande call.

Usury.

Leaue prating Conscience, thou canst not mollifie my hart, He shall in spite of thee and all other feeble his deadly smart. Yet Ile not commit the murder openly, But hale the villaine into a corner, and so kill him secretly. Come ye miserable drudge, and receiue thy death.

Hale him in.

Hospi.

Helpe good Ladie, helpe, he will stop my breath.

Consci.

Alas I would helpe thee, but I haue not the power.

Hospi.

Farewell Ladie Conscience, you shall haue Hospitalitie in London no longer England no more.

Consci.

O helpe, helpe, helpe, some good bodie.

### ¶ Enter Dissimulation and Simplicie hastily.

Dissim.

Who is that that calles for helpe so hastily?

Consci.

Out alas thy fellowe Usurie hath killed Hospitalitie.

Simpli.

Now Gods blessing on his hart, why twas time that he was dead, He was an olde churle, with neuer a good tooth in his head, And he nere kept no good chere that I could see:



of the three Ladies of London.

For if one had not come at dinner time, hee shoulde haue gone away hungry.

I could neuer get my bellie full of meate,

He had nothing but baeke, bread, and cheese for me to eate.

Nowe I would haue had some Pyes, or bagge puddings with great lumps of fat:

But I warrant ye he did keepe my mouth well enough from that.

Faith and he be dead he is deade, let him go to the deuill, and he will,

Or if he will not go thither, let him euen lie there still.

Ile nere make wamentation for an olde churle,

For hee has bene a great while, and nowe tis time that he were out of the worlde.

Enter Lucar.

What Conscience, thou lookest like a poore pidgeon puld of late.

What Lucar, thou lookest like a whoze full of deadly hate.

Alas Conscience I am soze for thee, but I cannot weepe.

Alas Lucar I am soze for thee, that thou canst no honestie keepe.

But such as thou art, such are thy attenders on thee,

As appeares by thy seruant Usurie, that hath killed that good member Hospitalitie.

Faith Hospitalitie is killed, and hath made his will,

And hath giuen Dissimulation thre trees vpon an high hill.

Come hither Dissimulation, and hee you hence so fast as you may,

And helpe thy fellowe Usurie to conuay himselfe out of the way.

Further, will the Iustices, if they chaunce to see him, not to know him,

Or knowe him, not by any meanes to hinder him.

And they shall commaund thise so much at my hand,

Go trudge, runne out away, how doest thou stand?

May good Lady, sende my fellowe Symonie,

For I haue an earnest suite to yee.

Then Symony go do what I haue wold.

I runne Madam, your mind shall be fulfilled. exit.

Well well Lucar, Audeo, et taceo, I see and say nothing:

But I feare the plague of God on thy head it will bring.

Good Ladie graunt that I oue be your waiting Maide,

For I thinke being brought so lowe, she will be well apace.

Speakest thou in good earnest, or doest thou but dissemble?

I knowe not how to haue thee thou art so variable.

Ladie, though my name bee Dissimulation, yet I speake bona fide nowe,

If it please you my petitions to allowe.

Enter Symony.

Stand by, Ile answere thee anon. What newes Symonie,

Bingest thou of thy fellowe Usurie?

May Madam good newes: for Usurie lies close

D. 11.

1110

Lucar.

Consci.

Lucar.

Consci.

Simpli.

Lucar.

Dissim.

Lucar.

Symo.

Conl.

Dissim.

Lucar.

Dissim.

Lucar.

Symo.



## A pithie and pleasant Comœdie

hid in a rich mans house, that will not let him loose,  
 Untill they see the matter brought to a good ende,  
 For I sūre in this cuntry hath many a good frende.  
 And late I sawe Hospitallie carried to burying.

Lucar.

Symo.

I pray thee tell me, who were they that followed him?  
 There were many of the Cleargie, and many of the Nobilitie,  
 And many right worshipfull rich Citizens,  
 Substantiall, gracious, and verie welchme Farmers.  
 But to see how the poore followed him it was a wonder,  
 Neuer yet at any buryall I haue seene such a number.

Lucar.

Sym.

But what say the people of the murder?  
 Many are soze and say tis great pitie that he was slaine,  
 But who be they: the poore beggarly people that so complaine:  
 As for the other, they say twas a cruell bloodie fact,  
 But I perceiue none will hinder the murderer for this cruell act.

Lucar.

Tis well, I am glad of it, nowe Dissimulation if you can get Louers  
 good will,

Dissim.

I am contented withall my hart to graunt there untill,  
 I thanke you good Ladie, and I doubt not but she  
 With a litle intreatie will thereto agree.

Simpli.

Nowe I haue it in my braeches, for I can tell,  
 That I and my Ladie with mistresse Lucar shall dwell.  
 But if I be her seruing fellowe, and dwell there,  
 I must learne to cog, lie, foist and sweare.  
 And sure I shall neuer learne, marie and twere to lie a bed all day,  
 I know to that kind of luing I can giue a good say.  
 Or if twere to eate ones meate, then I knew what I had to do:  
 How say ye sirra, can I not, ile be drudge by you.

Lucar.

How to you little mouse, did I not tell you before,  
 That I should ere twere long turne you both out of doore:  
 How say you pretie soule, ist come to passe, yea or no?  
 I thinke I haue pild your peacockes plumes somewhat late.  
 And yet you be so stout as though you felt no grieve,  
 But I know ere it be long you will come puling to me for reliefe.

Consci

Well Lucar well, you know pride will haue a fall:  
 What a iauant ageth it this to win the world, and lose thy soule withall:  
 Yet better it is to lue with litle, and keepe a conscience cleare,  
 Which is to Go a Sacrifice, and accounted of most deare.

Lucar.

Nay Conscience, and you be bookish I meane to leave ye,  
 And the cold ground to comfort your feet I bequeath ye.  
 He thinke you being so depely learned, may do well to keepe a schoole,  
 Why, I haue seene so cunning a Clarke in time to proue a foole.

Exeunt Lucar and Symony.

Simpli.

Sirra, if thou shouldst marry my Lady thou wouldst keepe her braue,  
 For I thinke now thou art a plague rich knave.

Dissim.

Rich I am, but as for knave keepe to thy selfe,  
 Come giue me my Ladies gowne thou asse headed elfe.

Simpli.

Dissim.

Why ile go with thee, for I must dwell with my Ladie.  
 Packe hence away, Iacke Drums intertainement, she will none  
 of



## of the three Ladies of London.

of the.

This is as my cosen and I went to M. Demos house, Simp.  
 There was no bodie to bid a dog drinke, or to chaunge a man a soule.  
 But Ladie Conscience (nay whose there) scratch that name away,  
 Is she a Lady that is turned out of all her braye?  
 Do not be cald no more Ladie, and if you be wise,  
 For euery bodie will mecke you, and say you be not swooth swooth  
 butter flies.

What remedie Simplicite: I cannot do withall. Consci.

But what shall we go do, or whereto shall we fall?

Why to our bittailes, I know nothing els we haue to do, Simpli.

And marke if I cannot eate twentie times as much as you.

If I go lie in an Inne, I shall be sore graued to see, Consci.

The deceit of the Ostler, the powling of the Tapster, as in most houses  
 of lodging they be.

If in a Brewers house, at the ouer plentie of water, and scarcenes of  
 maile I should graue,

Whereby to enrich themselves, all other with vsauorie thinne drinke  
 they deceiue.

If in a Tanners house, with his great deceit in tanning,

If in a Weavers house, with his great cosening in weauing.

If in a Bakers house, with light bread, and very cutill swooking:

If in a Chaunders, with deceitfull waights, false measures, selling for  
 a halfe peny that is scant worth a farthing.

And if in an Alehouse, with the great resort of poore bntzistes,  
 that with swearing at the Cardes consume their liues,

Having greater delight to spend a shilling that way,

then a groat at home to sustaine their na die chidzen and wiues.

For which I iudge it best for me to get some solitarie place,

Where I may with patience this my heauie crosse embrace.

And learne to seeke brome, whereby to get my liuing,

Using that as a quiet meane to keepe my selfe from begging.

Wherefore Simplicite if thou wilt do the like,

Settle thy selfe to it, and with true labour thy liuing do sake.

Exit Conscience.

No faith mistars Conscience, Ile not, for and I should sake brome, Simpli

The Maides would cosen me to camperuallly with their olde shone.

And too I cannot worke, and you would hang mee out of the way,

For when I was a miller, Will did grind the meale while I did play.

Therefore Ile haue as easie an occupation as I had when my father  
 was alive,

Faith Ile go euen a begging, why tis a good trade, a man shall bee sure to  
 chine.

For I am sure my prayers will get bread and cheese, and my singing will  
 get me drinke,

Then shall not I doe better then Mistars Conscience: tell mee as you  
 thinke.

Therefore God Danne in the kitchen, and God Dotte in the butterie,

Come and rell me, that I may sing with the more meliostie.

Dij.

But



## A pitche and pleasaunt Comedie

But first marks my cauled countenance when I begin,  
 But yonder is a fellow that gapes to bite me or els to eate that which I  
 sing. *of a fellow*  
 Why thou art a foole canst not thou keepe thy mouth strait together?  
 And when it comes snap at it as my fathers dogge wou'd doe at a liuer.  
 But thou art so greedie,  
 That thou thinkest to eate it before it come nye thee.

The Simplicite singes.

Simplicite singes it, and sperience doth proue,  
 No bidding in London for Conscience and Loue.

The Countrey hath no peare,  
 where Conscience comes not once a yeare:  
 And Loue so welcome to euery towne,  
 as winde that blowes the houses downe.  
 Sing downe adowne, downe, downe, downe.

Simpli. Simplicite singes it and sperience doth proue,  
 No dwelling in London, no bidding in London for Conscience and Loue.  
 Now sirra hast eaten vp my song? and ye haue ye shall eate no more  
 to day,  
 For euery body may see your belly is growne bigger with eating vp our  
 play:  
 He has filld his belly, but I am neuer a whit the better,  
 Therefore ile go seeke some vittailles, and murther for eating vp my song  
 you shall be my debter.

Enter Mercadorus the Merchaunt and Gerontus a lewe.

Geron. But senior Mercadorus tell me, did ye serue me well or no?  
 That hauing gotten my money wou'd seeme the countrey to forgoe:  
 You know I lent you two thousand duckets for thre monthes space,  
 And eare the time came you got an other thousand by flatterie and your  
 smooth face.  
 So when the time came that I should haue receaued my money,  
 You were not to be found but was fled out of the countrey:  
 Surely if we that be Jewes should deale so one with an other,  
 We should not be trusted againe of our owne brother:  
 But many of you Christians make no conscience to falsifie your sayth and  
 breake your day.  
 I should haue bene paide at the monthes end, and now it is two yeare  
 you haue bene away.  
 Well I am glad you be come againe to Turkey, now I trust I shall re-  
 ceive the interest of you so well as the principall.  
 Merca. A good a maister Gerontus pra hartly bare a me a little while,  
 And me shall pay ye all without any deceite or guile:  
 We haue a much businesse for by pretie knackes to send to England,  
 Good a sir bare a me foure or fife daies, mele dispatch your money out of  
 hand. Senior



of the three Ladies of London.

**Senior** We readoze, I know no reason why, because you haue dealt  
 with me so ill,  
**Merca.** Sure you did it not for neede, but of set purpose and will:  
**Senior** And I tell ye to beare with ye foure or fve dapes goes soe against my  
 minde,  
**Merca.** I cast you shoulde steale away and forget to leaue my money behinde.  
**Senior** Pra hartly doe tynke a no such tynge my good friend & me,  
**Merca.** We me trot and sayt wele pay you all euery peny.  
**Senior** Well Ile take your faith and troth once moze, ile trust to your honesty  
**Merca.** In hope that for my long taryng you will deale well with me:  
**Senior** Tell me what wares you would buy for England, such necessaries  
 as they lacke.  
**Merca.** I no lacke some prettie fine toy or some fantastike new knack,  
**Senior** For da Gentlewomans in England buy much tynge for fantasies  
 You pleasure a me sir what me meane a dare buy.  
**Merca.** I vnderstand you sir, but keepe tutch with me, and ile bring you to  
 great store,  
**Senior** Such as I perceaue you came to this countrey for:  
**Merca.** As Muske, Amber, sweete Powders, fine Oders, pleasant perfumes,  
 and many such toys:  
**Senior** Wherein I perceaue consisteth that countrey gentlewomans Joyes.  
**Merca.** Besides I haue Diamondes, Rubyes, Emerodes, Saphyrs, Smar-  
 dines, Opalles, Onacles, Ialukes, Aggattes, Turbasir, and almost of  
 all kinde of precious stones:  
**Senior** And many moe fit thinges to sucke away money from such greene headed  
 swantons.  
**Merca.** Iatta my good frend me tanke you most hartly alway,  
**Senior** We shall a content your debt within dis tye or tree day.  
**Merca.** Well looke you doe keepe your promise, and an other time you shall  
 commaund me:  
**Senior** Come, goe we home where our commodities you may at pleasure see.

Enter Conscience with broomes at her back sing-  
 ing as followeth.

New broomes, greene broomes, will you by any,  
 Come maydens, come quickly, let me take a peny.

My broomes are not steeped,	Haue you any olde bootes,
but very well bound:	or any olde shoone:
My broomes be not crooked,	Powch-ringes or Buskins,
but smooth cut and round.	to cope for new broome.
I wish it should please you,	If so you haue maydens,
to buy of my broome:	I pray you bring hether:
Then would it well ease me,	That you and I friendly,
if market were done.	may bargin together.

New broomes, greene broomes, will you buy any:  
 Come Maydens, come quickly, let me take a peny.

Consci.



# A pithie and pleasaunt Comedie

## Conscience speaketh.

Thus am I diuened to make a better of necessitie  
 And seeing God almightie will haue it so, I embrace it thank fully:  
 Desiring God to molleue and lessen Vserie hard heart,  
 That the poore people, feele not the like penurie and smart:  
 But Vserie is made tollerable amongst Christians as a necessary thing.  
 So that going beyond the limites of our law, they extorte, and many to  
 But if we should follow Gods law we should not reueane about that wee  
 lend. For if we lend for reward, how can we say we are our neighbors friend:  
 How blessed shall that man be that lendes without abate:  
 But thise accursed shall he be that greatly conuers vble:  
 For he that couet ouer much vnfacie is his minde,  
 So that to perurie and crueltie, he holp is vnde:  
 Wherewith they sore oppresse the poore by diuers sundry waies,  
 Whiche makes them cry vnto the Lord so often such waies dayes:  
 Hauke telleth them threats that doth not geue the needie of their store,  
 And thise accurst are they that take one penny from the poore:  
 But while I stand reasoning thus I forget my market cleane,  
 And seeh God hath ordained this way, I am to vse the meane.

Sing agayne.

Hauye ye any olde shoes, or haue ye any bootes, haue ye any buskines, or will  
 ye buy any bzomes. Who bargin or chop with conscience, what will no customer  
 come?

Enter Vserie.

Vsury. Who is it that cries bzomes, what cons. selling bzomes about þ street?  
 Consci. What Vserie, it is great pitie thou art vnchanged yet.  
 Vsury. Welcme me Conscience, it grieues me thou art brought so low.  
 Consci. Welcme me Vserie it grieues me thou wast not hanged long agoe,  
 For if thou hadst bene hanged before thou slewest Hospitalitie,  
 Thou hadst not made me and thousandes more to feele like pouertie.

Enter Lucar.

Lucar. We thought I heard one cry bzomes along the doze.  
 Vsury. I marrie Madam it was Conscience, who seemes to be offended at  
 Lucar. at me herie soze.  
 Consc. Alas Conscience art thou become a poore bzomewife?  
 Lucar. Alas Lucar wilt thou continue a harlot all dayes of thy li'e?  
 Consci. Alas I thinke it is a greefe to thee that thou art so poore.  
 Lucar. Alas Lucar I thinke it is no paine to thee that thou still plaicst the  
 whoze.  
 Lucar. Well well Conscience that sharpe tonge of thine hath not beens thy  
 furtheraunce.



of the three Ladies of London.

I: thou hadst kept thy tongue, thou hadst kept thy friend, and not haue  
had such hinderance:

But wottest thou who shalbe married to morrow?

Ioue with my D. stimulation,

For I thinke to bid the geese, they are by this time well nye gone:

And hauing occasion to vse broomes, I care not if I buy them all.

Then gease me a shilling and with a good will haue them you  
shall.

Consci.

Alerie carrie in these broomes and geue them to the maide,

Lucar.

For I know of such stoze she will be well apaid.

Exit Vserie with the broomes.

Should Consc. though thy broomes be not worth a quarter so much,

Yet to gease thee a peece of gold I doe it not grutch:

And if thou wouldest follow my mynd, thou shouldst not lye in such sozt,

But passe thy dayes with pleasure stoze of euery kinde of sport.

I thinke you leach the worlde in a string, for euery body followes  
you.

Consci.

And sith euery one doth it, why may not I doe it too,

For that I see your free hart, and great liberallitie:

I maruell not that all people are so willing to follow ye.

Then sweete soule marke what I would haue thee doe for me,

That is to decke by thy poore Cottage handsomely:

Lucar

And for that purpose I haue five thousandes Crownes in stoze,

And when it is spent thou shalt haue twice as much more,

But onely see thy roomes be neat when I shal thither resort:

With familiar friendes to play and passe the time in sport:

For the Debutie, Constable, and spitefull neighbours doe spy, pry, and  
ere about my house:

That I dare not be once merrie within, but still mute like a mouse.

My good Ladie Lucar I will fulfil your minde in euery kinde of  
thing.

Consci.

So that you shalbe welcome at all houres whome soeuer you doe  
bring:

And all the dogges in the towne shall not barke at your doings I trow,

For your full pretence and intent I doe thoroughly know:

Euen so well as if you had opened the very secrettes of your heart:

For wile the I doubt not but to rest in your fauour by my desert:

But here comes your man Alerie.

Enter Vserie.

Ile send him home for the money,

Lucar.

Alerie steppes in and bring me the boxe of all abomination that standes  
in the window:

It is litle and round painted with diuers colours and is prettie to the  
show.

Whadam is there any superscription there on?

Vserie.

Haue I not tolde you the name: for shame get you gone.

Lucar.

Well my wenche I doubt not but our pleasures shall excell,

E. l.

seeing



## A pithie and pleasaunt Comœdie

Spring thou hast got a corner fit where few neighbours dwell,  
And they be of the poorest sort which fits our turne so right:  
Because they dare not speake against our sportes and sweete delight,  
And if they should (alas their wordes) would nought at al be wayd,  
And for to speake before my face, they wil be al afraid.

Enter Vserie with a paynted boxe of  
incke in hy hand.

Vserie.  
Lucar.

Madam I deeme the same be it, so farre as I can gette.  
You saie it the trueth tis it in deede, the outide shewes no lesse.  
But Vserie I thinke Dissimulation hath not seene you since your  
comming home:  
Therefore goe see him, he will reioyce when you to him are shorne,  
It is a busie time with him, help to further him if you can.  
He may commaund me to attend at boord to be his man.

Vserie.

Exit Vserie.

Here let Lucar open the boxe and dip her finger in  
it, and spotte Conscience face, saying  
as followeth.

Lucar.

Would here my sweete, and them ouer to see if any want,  
The more I doe behold this face, the more my minde doth vaunt:  
This face is of fauor, these cheekes are redde and white,  
These lips are cherry red, and full of deepe delight.  
Quickie rowling eyes, her temples hygh, and forehead white as snowe,  
Her eye-browes seemely set in frame, with dimpled chinne below:  
O how beautie hath adorneed thee with euery seemely hew,  
In limmes, in-lookes, with all the rest, proportion keeping dew:  
Sure I haue not seene a finer soule in euery kinde of part,  
I can not choose but kisse thee with my lippes that loue thee with my  
heart.

Conl

I haue tould the crownes and here are iust so many as you to me did  
say.

Lucar.

Then when thou wilt thou maist depart, and homewardest take thy  
way.

And I pray thee make haste in decking of thy robe,  
That I may vnder thy lodging fine, when with my friend I come.

Consci

Ile make speeche, and where I haue with broomes oft times bene  
coming:

I meane henceforth not to be seene, but sitte to watche your com-  
ming.

Exit Conscience.

Lucar.

O how ioyfull may I be, that such successe doe finde,  
For mynell, for pouertie and desire of Lucar doe force them follow my  
minde:

Now



of the three Ladies of London.

How may I reioyce in full contentation,  
That shall marry Loue with Dissimulation:  
And haue spotted Conscience with all abomination,  
But I forget my selfe, for I must to the wedding,  
Both vauntingly and flauntingly, although I had no bidding.

Exit Lucas.

Enter Dissimulation and Coggin hys  
man, and Symony.

Sir although you be my maister I woulde not haue you to vpbraide Cog.  
my name,  
But I would haue you vse the right skill and title of the same:  
For my name is neither scogging, nor scragging, but auncient Cogging:  
Sir my Ancestors were kinne of the foure worthies,  
And your selfe are of my neare kinne.  
Indeede thou sayst true for Coggin is a kinsman to Dissimulation, Dissim.  
But tell me haue you taken the names of the guesles?  
Yea sir. Cog.  
Let me heare after what fashion. Dissim.

The names of the guesles tolde  
by Coggin.

There is first and formost maister Forgery, and maister Flatterie, Cog.  
Maister Perurie and maister Inurie:  
Maister Crueltie, and maister Dickarie, maister Wilyber and mayster  
Treacherie:  
Maister Wincke at wrong, and maister Headstrong, mistris priuie Theft  
And maister deepe Deceit, maister Abomination, and maister Fornica-  
tion his wife, Ferdinands false-waight, and Frisks false-measure  
his wife.  
Stay, Fornication and Frisks false-measure they are often familiar Dissim.  
With my Lady Lucas, and one of them she accountes her friend:  
Therefore they shall sit with the Wyde in the midst, and the men at  
eche end:  
Let me see, there are sixtene, euen as many as well neare is able  
To dine in the summer parlor at the playing table:  
Beside my fellow Fraud, and you fellow Symony,  
But I shall haue a great misse of my fellow Userie. Symo.  
Take no care for that, he came home yester day euen no longer,  
His pardon was quickly begged, and that by a Courtyer:  
And sirra, since he came home he had like to haue some good neigh-  
bourhood and liberalitie,  
Had not true friendship kept betwene them very sodenly:  
But sirra he hit true friendship with the blow on the eare,  
That he keepe out of all mens sight, I thinke for shame or for feare.

Exit.

Now



## A pithie and pleasaunt Comœdie

**Di Tim.** How of my troth it is a prettie iest, hath he made true friendship hide his head?

**Symo.** Sure if it be so good neighbourhode and liberalitie for feare are fled.  
**But fellow Dissimulation tel me what Priest shall marry ye?**

**Dissim.** Why thy is thal an olde friend of mine Master Doctor Hipocrisie.

**Symo.** Why will you not haue Sir Peter Pleaie man to supply that want?

**Dissim.** Indrede Sir Peter is a good Priest, but Doctor Hipocrisie is most auncient.

But cousin Coggin, I pray you goe to inuite the gesses,  
And tell them that they neede not disturbe their quietnes:

Desire them to come at dinner time and it shall suffice,

Because I know they will be loth so early to rise.

But at any hand will Doctor Hipocrisie,

That he meete vs at the Church very early:

For I would not haue all the world to wonder at our match,

It is an olde proverbe, tis good hauing a hatch before the doze, but she haue a doze before the hatch.

**Cog.** Sir I will about it as fast as I can hye,

He first to that scalde balde knaue Doctor Hipocrisie.

Exit Cog.

**Symo.** But fellow Dissimulation how darest thou marry with Loue, bearing no loue at all?

For thou doest nothing but dissemble, then thy loue must needes be small:

Thou canst not loue but from the teeth forward,

Sure the wife that marries thee shall highly be prefard:

**Dissim.** Tush tush, you are a merry man, I warrant you I know what I do.

And can yeald a good reason for it I may say vnto you.

What and if the world should channge and ranne all on her side?

Then might I by her meanes still in good credite abide:

Thou knowest loue is auncient and liues peaceably without any strife.

Then sure the people will thinke well of me because shee is my wife.

**Symo.** Trust me thou art as craftie to haue an eye to the mayne chaunce:

As the Taylor that out of seuen yardes stole one and a halfe of durance.

He serued at that time the deuill in likenesse of Saint Katherine,

Such Taylors will thriue that out of a doublet and a payre of hose, can steale their wife an Spozne:

The Doublet sleeves thre fingers were to short,

The Venecians came nothing neare the knee.

**Dissim.** Then for to make them long inough I pray thee what did hee?

**Symo.** Two peeces set an handfull broad to lengthen them withall,

Yet for all that below the knee by no meanes they could fall.

He seeing that desired the partie to buy as much to make an other paire

The partie did, yet for all that he stole a quarter there.

**Dissim.** Now sure I can him thanke he could his occupation:



Of the three Ladies of London.

My fellowe Fraude would laugh to heare one drest of such a fashion.  
But fellowe Symony, I thanke you hartily for comparing the Taylor  
to me,

As who should say, his knauerie and my pollicie did not agree.

Not so, but I was the willinger to tell thee, because I know it to be a true tale, Symo.

And to see howe Artificers doe extoll Fraude, by whome they beare  
their faile.

But come let vs walke, and talke no more of this,  
Your pollicie was very good, and so no doubt was his.

Exeunt.

Enter Mercadorus reading a letter to himselfe, and  
let Geronus the Iewe followe him, and  
speake as followeth.

Senior Mercadore, why doe you not pay mee? thinke you I will be  
mockt in this sort?

Geron.

This is three times you haue flowted mee, it seemes you make therent  
a sporte.

Trulie pay me my money, and that euen now presently,

O by mightie Mahomer I sweare, I will forthwith arrest you.

Merca.

Ha pray a bare wit me tre of foure daies, mee haue much businesse  
in hand:

We be troubled with letters you see here, dat comes from England.

Geron.

Tush this is not my matter, I haue nothing therewith to do,

Pay me my money or Ile make you, before to your lodging you go.

I haue Officers stand watching for you, so that you cannot passe by,

Therefore you were best to pay me, or els in prison you shall lie.

Merca.

Arrest me thou skal knaue, maye do and if thou dare,

We will not pay be one peny, arrest me, doo, me do not care.

We will be a Turke, me came hedar for dat cause,

Darefoze me care not for be so much as two drawes.

Geron.

This is but your wordes, because you would defeate me,

I cannot thinke you will forsake your faith so lightly.

But seeing you dize me to doubt, Ile trie your honestie:

Therefore be sure of this, Ile go about it presently. Exit.

Merca.

Many farewell and be hangd, sitten scald drunken Jew.

I warrant you me shalbe able very well to pay you.

My Lady Lucar haue sent me heere dis letter,

Praying me to cossen de Jewe for loue a her.

Darefoze me go to get a some Turks apparell,

Dat me may cossen da Jewe, and end dis quarrell. Exit.

Enter three Beggars, that is to say, Tom  
Beggar, wily Will, and Simplicitie  
singing.



# A pithe and pleasant Comedie

## The Song.

To the wedding, to the wedding, to the wedding go wee,  
To the wedding a begging, a begging, all thye.

**T**OM Beggar shall braue it, and wyly Will to,  
Simpli-tye shall knaue it where euer we go:  
With lustely Brauado, take care that care will,  
To catch it, and snatch it, we haue the braue skill.

Our fingers are lime-twigges, and Barbaras we be,  
To catch sheetes from hedges most pleasant to see:  
Then to the alewife roundly we set them to sale,  
And spend the money merily vpon her good ale.

To the wedding, to the wedding, to the wedding go wee,  
To the wedding a begging, a begging all thye.

## FINIS.

**Tom.** Now truely my maisters, of all occupations vnder the sunne, begging  
is the best,

For when a man is wearie, then may he lay him downe to rest.  
Tell me, is it not a Lordes h's in Sommer to louse one vnder a hedge,  
And then leauing that game, may go clepe and colt his Whadge?  
Or els may walke to take the whole some ayre abroade for his delight,  
Where he may tumble on the graile, haue swete smells, and see manie a  
pierre fight.

Why, an Emperour for all his wealth can haue but his pleasure,  
And surely I would not lose my charter of libertie, for all the Kinges  
treasure.

**Will.** Shall I tell thee Tom Beggar: by the faith of a Gentleman, this  
auncient freedom I would not forgo,  
If I might haue whole Dynes of money at my will to bestowe.  
When a mans mind should be troubled to keepe that he had,  
And you knowe it were not for me, it would make my valiant mind mad.  
For now we neither pay Church money, subsidies, lictenes, leet, nor lot.  
All the payings we pay, is to pay the good ale pot.

**Simpli.** But fellowe Beggars, you cossen me, and take away all the best meat,  
And leaue me nothing but browne bread, or sinne of fish to eate.  
When you be at the Alehouse, you drinke by the strong ale, and giue mee  
small beere:

You tell me tis better then the strong, to make me sing cleare.  
And ye you know with my singing I get twice so much as ye,  
But and you serue me so, you shall sing your selues, and beg alone for me.

**Tom.** We stand prating here, come let vs go to the gate,  
Mas I am greatly afraid we are come somewhat too late.  
Good gentle M. Porter your reward do bestowe,  
On a poore lame man, that hath but a paire of legges to goe.



of the three Ladies of London.

For the honour of God good M<sup>r</sup>as Porter, geue somewhat to the blind Will.  
That the way to the Alchouse in his sleepe cannot find.  
For the good Lords sake take compassion on the poore.

Tom.

¶ Enter Fraud with a basket of meat on his arme

How now Sirs, you are vengeance hastie, can ye not tarrie?  
But stand hawling so at my Ladies doze.

Fraude.

Here take it amongst you, yet were a good almes deede to geue you  
nothing,

Because you were so hastie, and kept such a calling.

I beseech ye not so Sir, for we were verie hungry.

Tom.

That made vs so earnest, but we are sorie we troubled ye.

Howe how goodie they be, like dogs that fall a snatchiing,

Simpli.

You shall see that I shall haue the greatest almes, because I saide no-  
thing.

Fraude knowes me, therefore hele be my friend I am sure of that,

They haue nothing but leane baste, ye shall see I shall haue a peece that  
is fat.

After fraude you haue forgot me; pray ye let me haue my share.

Fraude.

Faith all is gone, thou comest too late, thou seest all is giuen there.

By the faith of a Gentleman I haue it not, I would I were able to  
geue thee more.

O Sir, I sawe your armes hang out at a stable doze.

Simpli.

Indeed my armes are at the Painters, belike he hung them out to dye, Fraude.

I pray thee tell me what they were, if thou canst them descrie.

Wary there was neuer a scutchin, but there was 2. crosses rampant,

Simpli.

And then ouer them lay a fower crese passant,

With a manlike you in a greene field pendant,

Hauiing a hempten halter about his necke, with a knot vnder the left eare  
because you are a younger brother.

Then Sir, there stand on ech side holding by the crease,

A worthy Officers hand in a die of greace:

Besides all this, on the helmet stands the hangmans hand,

Ready to turne the Ladder where on your picture did stand:

Then vnder the helmet hung Tables like chames, and for what they are  
I cannot deuise,

Except it be to make you hang fast, that the Crows might picke out  
your eyes.

What a swad is this: I had bene better to haue sent him to the backe Fraude.  
doze,

To haue gotten some almes amongst the rest of the poore:

Thou praisst thou canst not tell what, or els art not well in thy wit,

I am sure my armes are not blazd so farre abroad as yet.

Does Sir, your armes were knowne a great while ago,

Simpli.

For your elder brother Deceite did giue those armes to.

Wary the difference is all, which is the knot vnder the left eare:

The Painter saies when he is hang, you may put out the knot without  
fear.

I am sure they were your armes, for there was wrytten in Romaine  
letters about the hempten collar,

Then



## A pithie and pleasant Comedie

GIVEN by the worthe valiant Captaine Maister Fraude the Ostler.  
Now God be wic ye Sir, I le get me euen close to the backe doore.  
Farewell Tom Beggar, and wylie Will, I le begge with you no more.

Exit.

Tom. O farewell Simplicitie, we are verie loth to lose thy companie.  
Fraude. Now he is gone giue eare to me. You seeme to be sound men in euerie  
wynt and sum,  
And can ye lye in this sorte, to goe by and downe the country a begging:  
O t' a mounds I trow, I had rather hacke it out by the high way side,  
Then such ruelerie and penurie still to abide.  
Sirs, if you will be rulde by me, and do what I shall say,  
I le bring ye where we shall haue a notable fine pray.  
It is so Sirs, that a Merchant, one Mercatorus, is comming from

Turky,

And it is my Ladies pleasure that he robbed should be,  
She hath sworne that we shalbe all sharers alike,

Tom. And vpon that willed me some such companions as you be to seeke.

O worthe Captaine Fraude, you haue wonne my noble hart:

You shall see how manfully I can play my part.

And heeres wylie Will, as good a fellowe as your hart can wish,

Will. To go a fishing with a cranke through a windowe, or to set limetwiggers  
to catch a pan, potte, or dish.

He sayes true, for I tell you I am one that will not gene backe,

Not for a druble shot out of a blacke Jacke.

O Sir you bring vs a bed when ye talke of this geare,

Fraude. Come, shall we go wezthy Captaine? I long till we be there.

I, let vs about it, to provide our weapons ready,

Tom. And when the time serues, I my selfe will conduct yee.

O valiantly spoken, come wylie Will, two pots of ale wele bestowe,

On our Captaine copagiously for a parting blowe.

Exeunt.

Enter the Iudge of Turkie, with Geron-  
tus and Mercadorus.

Iudge. Sir Gerontus, because you are the plaintife, you first your minde  
shall say,

Declare the cause you did arrest this Merchant yesterday.

Geron. Then learned Iudge attende. This Mercadorus whom you see in  
place,

Did borowe two thousand Duckets of mee, but for a five weeks space.

Then Sir, before the day came, by his flatterie he obtained one thousand  
more,

And promist mee at two monthes ende I should receiue my stoze:

But before the time expired, he was closely fled away,

So that I neuer heard of him at least this two yeres day:

Call at the last I met with him, and my money did demande,

Who swaare to me at five daies end, he would pay me out of hand.

The five daies came, and thre daies more, then one day he requested,

3



of the three Ladies of London.

I perceiuing that he flouted me, haue got him thus arrested:

And now he comes in Turkish weedes to defeat me of my money,  
But I trow he wil not forsake his faith, I deme he hath moze honestie,  
Sir Gerontus you knowe, if any man forsake his faith, king, countrie, Iudge.

and become a Mahomet,  
All debtes are paide, tis the lawe of our Realme, and you may not gaine-  
say it.

Alst true (reuerent Iudge) we may not, nor I will not against our Geron.  
Lawes grudge.

Senior Mercadorus is this true that Gerontus doth tell? Iudge.

My Lord Iudge, be matter, and be circumstance be true we know well. Merca.  
But me will be a Turke, and for dat cause me came heere.

Then it is but a follie to make many wordes. Senior Mercadorus Iudge  
draw neere.

Lay your hand vpon this booke, and say after mee,

With a good will my Lord Iudge, me be all readie. Merca.

Not for any deuotion, but for Lucars sake of my monie.

Say I Mercadorus, do bitterly renounce before all the world, my Dutie Geron.

to my Prince, my honour to my parents, and my good wil to my cuntry: Iudge &

furthermore I protest and swear to be true to this country during life, Merca.  
and therebpon I forsake my Christian faith.

Stay there most puissant Iudge. Senior Mercadorus, consider what Geron.  
you do,

Pay me the principall, as for the interest, I forgive it you:

And yet the interest is allowed amongst you Christians, as well as in  
Turky,

Therefore respect your faith, and do not seeme to deceiue me.

No point da interest, no point da principall. Merca.

Then pay me the one halfe, if you will not pay me all.

No point da halfe, no point denere, me will be a Turke I say, Merca.

We be wearie of my Christes religion, and for dat me come away.

Well seeing it is so, I would be loth to heare the people say, it was long Geron.  
of me

Thou forsakest thy faith, wherefore I forgive thee franke and free:

Protesting be'ore the Iudge, and all the world, neuer to demand penny  
nor halfe penny.

O Sir Gerontus, me take a your proffer, and tanke you most hartily. Merca

But senior Mercadorus, I trow ye will be a Turke for all this. Iudge.

Senior: no, not for all da good in da world, me forsake a my Christ. Merca.

Why then it is as Sir Gerontus saide, you did moze for the greedines of  
the mony, Iudge.

Then for any zeale or good will you bare to Turky.

Oh Sir, you make a great offence, Merca.

You must not iudge a my conscience.

One may iudge and speake truth as apperces by this, Iudge.

Jewes sake to excell in Christianitie, and Christians in Jewisnes. (Exit

Tell bell, but me tanke you Sir Gerontus with all my very hart. Merca.

What a good may it do you sir. I repent it not for my part.

But yet I would not haue this bolden you to serue an other so, Geron.

Sake to pay, a kepe day with men, so a good name on you wil go. (Exit.

You



## A pithie and pleasant Comedie

**Merca.** You say bel Strat but me good, dat me hane coostend de Jewe,  
 Fartij I would my Ladie Lucar de whole matter nowe knowe,  
 What is dat me will not do for her sweete sake,  
 But now me will provide my iourney toward England to take,  
 We be a Turke, no, it will make my Ladie Lucar to smile,  
 When she knowes how me did da scall Jewe beguile.  
Exit.

**Enter Lucar, and Loue with a visard behind,**

**Lucar.** Mistresse Loue, I maruell not a little what coy conceite is crepte into  
 your head,  
 That you seeme so sad and sorrowfull since the time you first did wed.  
 Tell me sweete wench what thou aylest, and if I can ease thy griefe,  
 I will be prest to pleasure thee in yelding of reliefe.  
 Sure thou makest me for to thinke some thing hath chaunst amisse,  
 I pray thee tell me what thou aylest, and what the matter is.

**Loue.** My griefe alas I shame to show, because my bad intent,  
 Hath brought on me a iust reward, and eke a straunge euent.  
 Shall I be counted Loue: nay rather lasciuious Lust,  
 Because vnto Dissimulation I did repose such trust.  
 But now I wone too late, and blush my hap to tell,  
 My head in monstrous sozt alas, doth more and more still swell.

**Lucar.** Is your head then swollen good Mistresse Loue, I pray you let me see,  
 Of troth it is, behold a fate, that seemes to smile on me:  
 It is faire and well fauoured, with a countenance smooth and good,  
 Wonder is the worst, to see two faces in a hood.

**Loue.** Come lets go, wele finde some spozs to spurne away such toys,  
 Were it not for Lucar, sure Loue had lost her ioyes.  
Exeunt.

**Enter Seruiceable Dilligence the Constable,  
 and Simplicitie, with an Officer to whip  
 him, or two if you can.**

**Simpli.** Why, but must I be whipt M. Constable in da d:  
 You may save your labour, for I haue no need.

**Dilli.** I must needs see thee punished, there is no remedie,  
 Except thou wilt confesse, and tell me,  
 Where thy fellows are become that did the robberie.

**Simpli.** In da d M. Constable, I do not knowe of their stealing,  
 For I did not see them since we went together a begging:  
 Therefore pray ye Sir, be miserable to me, and let me go,  
 For I labour to get my liuing with begging you know.

**Dilli.** Thou wast scene in their companie a little before the deede was  
 done,  
 Therefore it is most likely thou knowest where they are become.

why?



of the three Ladies of London.

Why maister Constable if a shæpe goe among Wolves all daye. Simpli.  
Shall the sheepe be blande if they steale any thing away.

I marrie shall he, for it is a great presumption,  
That keeping the a companie he is of like profession,  
But dispatche firz, strip him and whip him:  
Stand not to reason the question.

Indeede twas f fraud so it was, it was not I,  
And here he comes him selfe, aske him if I lye. Simpli.

Enter Fraud.

What saiest thou Villain? I would advise thee hold thy tongue,  
I know him to be a wealthy man and a Burges of the Towne:  
Sir and it please your maister ship, heres one slanders you with felony,  
He sayth you were the chiefe doer of a robberie. Dilli.

What sayes the rascall: but you know,  
It standeth not wth my credite to braule:  
But good maister Constable for his slaunderous report,  
Pay him double, and in a greater matter commaund me you shall. Fraude.

Exit.

Maister Constable must the countenance carry out the knaue,  
Why then if one will face folkes out, some fine reparable he must haue. Simpli.

Bedle put off his Clothes.

Come sir iack sauce: make quicke dispatche at once,  
You shall see how finely we will fetch the skin from your bones.

May but tell me whether you be both right handed or no?

What is that to thee, why wouldest thou so faine know?

Warrie if you should be both right handed, the one would hinder  
the other, Simpli.  
Bedle.

Then it would not be done finely according to order:

For if I be not whipt with credite it is not worth a pinne,

Therefore I pray maister Constable let me be whipt vpon my skarme.

Whereon dost thou think they would whip thee, I pray thee declare? Dilli.  
That thou puttest vs in minde, and takest such great care.

I was afrayd you woulde haue sworne out my clothes with whip- Simpli.  
ping.

Then afterward I should goe naked a begging.

Haue no doubt of that: we will fauour thy clothes,  
Thou shalt iudge that thy selfe, by feeling the blowes. Bedle.

Lead him once or twise about, whipping  
him, and so Exit.

Enter Iudge Nemo the clarke of the Sies, the Crier,  
and seruiceable Diligence, the Iudge and Clarke being  
set, the Crier shall sound three times.

f. ii.

Seruiceable



## A pithie and pleasant Comœdie

**Judge.** Heruicible Dilligence, bying hither such prisoners as are in your charge.  
**Dilli.** My dilligence shall be applied very willingly. (Kodis,  
 Pleasest it you, there are but three prisoners so farre as I knowe,  
 Which are Lucar and Conscience, with a deformed creature much like  
 Bistrans the base daughter of Iuno.  
**Judge.** No: where is that wretch Dissimulation?  
**Dilli.** He hath transformed himselfe after a straunge fashion.  
**Judge.** Fraude: where is he become?  
**Dilli.** He was seene in the streetes walking in a Citizens gowne.  
**Judge.** What is become of Usurie?  
**Dilli.** He was seene at the Exchainge very lately.  
**Judge.** Tell me, when haue you heard of Symony?  
**Dilli.** He was seene this day walking in Paules, having con'science and very  
 great familiaritie with some of the Cleargie.  
**Judge.** Fetch Lucar and Conscience to the Barre.  
**Dilli.** Behold worthy Judge, heere ready they are.

¶ Enter Lucar and Conscience.

**Judge.** Stand forth: Dilligence deuide them a sonder.  
**Clarke.** Lucar, thou art indited by the name of Lucar,  
 To haue committed adulterie with Mercadozus the Merchant, and  
 Creticus the Lawyer.  
 Thou art also endyted for the robberie of Mercadoze:  
 Lastly, and chiefly, for the consenting to the murder of Hospitalite.  
 What saiest thou, art thou guiltie or not in these causes?  
**Lucar.** Not guiltie, where are mine accusers, they may shewe their face  
 I warrant you none comes, noz dare to discredite my name: (case  
 In despite of the teeth of them that dare: I speake in disdain.  
**Judge.** Impudent, canst thou deny deedes so manifestly knowne.  
**Lucar.** In demall standes triall: I shame not, let them be showne,  
 It grindes my gall, they should sclander me on this sorte:  
 They are some olde rankered currish corrupt carles that gaue me this re- (poyt  
 My soule craves reuenge on such my sacred foes,  
 And reuengement I will haue, if body and soule I lose.  
**Judge.** Thy hatefull heart declares thy wicked life,  
 In the abundance of thy abomination all euils are rife:  
 But what sayest thou Conscience to thy accusation, (abomination.  
 That art accused to haue bene baynd vnto Lucar, and spotted with all  
**Consci.** What should I say, nay what would I say in this our naughty liuing  
**Lucar.** Good Conscience if thou loue me say nothing.  
**Clarke.** Dilligence, suffer her not to stand prating.  
 Let him put her aside.  
**Judge.** What letter is it in thy bosome Conscience: Dilligence reache it hither.  
 Make as though ye read it.  
 Conscience speake on, let me heare what thou canst say,  
 For I know in singlenesse thou wilt a truth bewray.  
**Consci.** My good Lord I haue no way to excuse my selfe,  
 She hath corrupted me by flatterie, and her accursed pelfe:  
 What need further triall, for I Conscience am a thousand witneses,



Of the three Ladies of London.

I cannot chuse but condemne vs all in liuing amisse,  
Such terror doth affright me, that liuing, I wish to dye:  
I am afraid there is no sparke left for me of Gods mercy.

Conscience where hadst thou this letter?

Iudge  
Consci.

It was put into my bosome by Lucar.

Willing me to keepe secret our lasciuious liuing,

I cannot but condemne vs all in this thing.

How now mallearpart stand you still in defence or no?

Iudge.

This letter declares thy guiltie Conscience, how saiest thou is it not so?

Tell me, why standest thou in a mase? speake quickly:

Hadst thou thy tongue so liberall, and now stand to study?

O Conscience thou hast kild me, by thee I am ouerthrowne,

Lucar  
Iudge

It is happie that by Conscience thy abhominacion is knowne,

Wherefore I pronounce iudgement against thee on this wise.

Thou shalt passe to the place of darcknesse, where thou shalt heare fearful  
cries.

Weeping, wayling, gnashing of teeth, and torment without end,

Burning in the lake of fire and brimstone because thou canst not amend:

Wherefore I charge thee hence, throw her down to the lowest hel,

Where the ill small sprites and damned ghostes do dwell.

And bring forth Loue.

Exit Lucar and Dilligence.

Let Lucar make ready for Loue quickly, and come  
with Dilligence.

Declare the cause Conscience at large, how thou comest so spotted,  
Whereby many by thee hath bene greatly infected:

For vnder the colour of Conscience thou deceiuedst many,

Causing them to defile the temple of God, whiche is mans body:

A cleane conscience is a sacrifice: Gods own resting place,

Why wast thou then corrupted so, and spotted on thy face?

Consci.

When Hospitalitie had his throte cut by Aserie,

He oppressed me with crueltie, and brought me to beggety:

Cursing me out of house and home, and in the end,

My gowne to pay my rent, to him I did send:

So driuen to that extremitie, I haue fallen to that you see,

Yet after iudgement I hope of Gods mercy.

Iudge.

O Conscience, shall cankered quoyne corrupt thy heart?

O shall want in this world cause thee to feele euerlasting smart?

O Conscience what a small time thou hast on earth to liue,

Why dost thou not then, to God all honoz geue?

Considering the time is euerlasting that thou shalt liue in blisse,

If by thy life thou rise from death, to iudgement, mercy, and forgiveness:

Enter Loue with Dilligence.

Stand aside Conscience: bring Loue to the barre,

J. iii.

What



## A pithie and pleasaunt Comedie

What failest thou to thy deformitie, who was the cause?

Loue. Ladie Lucar.

In ge. Did Lucar choke thee so, that thou gauest thy selfe ouer vnto lust?

And did prodigall expences cause thee in Dissimulation to trust?

Thou wast pure (Loue) and art thou become a monster,

Bolstering thy selfe vpon the lasciuiousnes of Lucar?

Loue answers for thy selfe, speake in thy defence.

Loue.

Iudg.

I cannot chuse but yeeld, confounded by Conscience.

Then iudgement I pronounce on thee, because thou followed Lucar,

Whereby thou hast sold thy soule, to feele like torment with her.

Which torments comprehended are in the worne of Conscience,

Who raging still, shall nere haue end, a plague for thine offence.

Care shall be thy comfort, and sorrow shall thy life sustaine,

Thou shalt be dying, yet neuer dead, but pining still in endles paine.

Dilligence, conuay her to Lucar, let that be her reward,

Because vnto her cankered come she gaue her whole regard.

But as for Conscience carry her to prison,

There to remaine vntill the day of the generall session:

Thus we make an ende,

Knowing that the best of vs all may amend:

Whiche God graunt, to his good will and pleasure,

That we be not corrupted with the vniuersall desire of banishing  
earthly treasure:

For Couetousnesse is the cause of wresting mans Conscience,

Therefore restraine thy lust, and thou shalt shonne the offence.

FINIS.

Paule Bucke.





